UC-NRLF
$B 310 416

A SUPPLEMENT,

COMPRISING THE SEVEN DRAMAS WHICH HAVE BEEN ASCRIBED TO HIS PEN, BUT WHICH ARE NOT INCLUDED WITH HIS WRITINGS IN MODERN EDITIONS.

EDITED,

WITH NOTES, AND AN INTRODUCTION TO EACH PLAY,

BY WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES ROYAL OCTAVO.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY GEORGE F. COOLEDGE & BROTHER,

323 PEARL STREET.

LONDON: SCOTT, WEBSTER, & GEARY.

☞ The SUPPLEMENT is also furnished separately, in one volume, royal octavo (cloth, gilt), for those who wish it to join with other editions.

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA

PRESENTED BY
PROF. CHARLES A. KOFOID AND
MRS. PRUDENCE W. KOFOID

ILLU Y,

SCHO

"These a rably
adapted to i bjects
of respect a

THE ON,
by W. 2mo.
10th ed

THE TH,
of Vir lions.
1 vol.

THE AM,
contai er be-
fore p 1 vol.

INCI RY:
compi illus-
tratio

THE SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE — Biographical Sketches of their Lives, etc. By B. J. Lossing; with Portraits, &c. 1 vol. 12mo.

THE LIFE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: by O. L. Holley; with illustrations. 1 vol. 12mo.

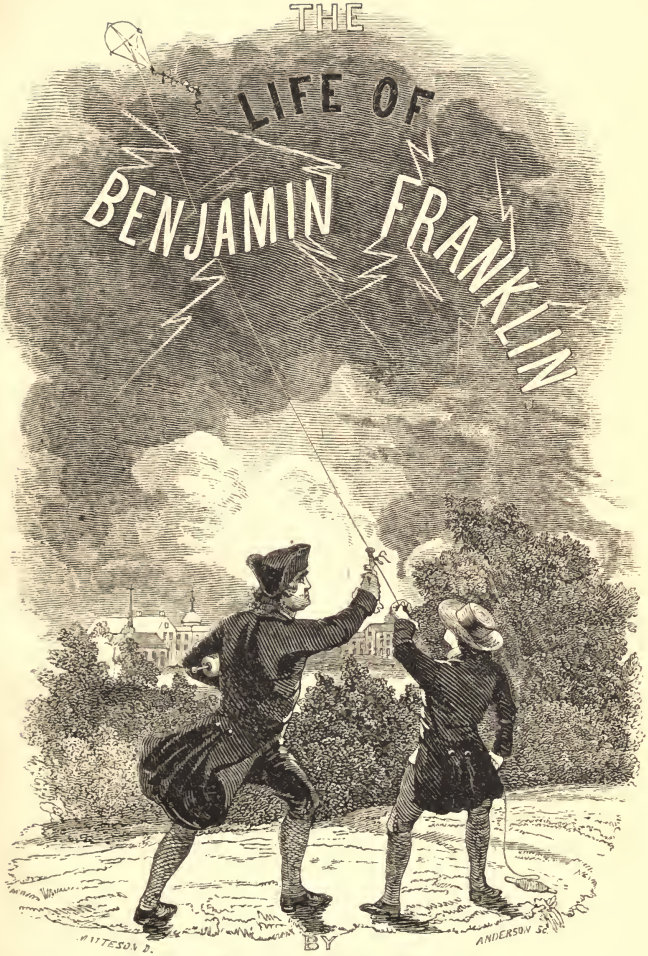
THE LIFE OF GENERAL LA FAYETTE: by William Cutter; with illustrations. 1 vol. 12mo.

This Series will be continued, by adding other volumes of the same American character.

Published by GEO. F. COOLEDGE & BROTHER, New York, and for sale by the principal Booksellers in all parts of the Union.

Benj. Franklin

THE LIFE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



BY

O. L. HOLLEY.

NEW-YORK:
GEO. F. COOLEDGE & BROTHER.

THE LIFE

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

BY O. L. HOLLEY.

NEW YORK:
GEORGE F. COOLEDGE & BROTHER,
PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS,
323 PEARL STREET.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1848,
By GEORGE F. COOLEDGE & BROTHER,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Southern District of New York.

STEREOTYPED BY C. C. SAVAGE,
13 Chambers Street, N. Y.

E 302
F 8 H57

PREFACE.

Franklin's own narrative of his life extends only to the 27th of July, 1757, the day on which he reached London, on his first mission as agent of Pennsylvania to the British court. He was then but little more than fifty-one years of age, so that nearly thirty-three years, embracing the most conspicuous portion of his career, was left, with the exception of occasional passages in his private correspondence, untouched by his own graphic pen; and though that sequel has been ably related by Dr. Sparks, yet the two performances, valuable as they are universally acknowledged to be, are both strictly narrative, embracing little but the recital of external occurrences. Well done, therefore, as they are, still much of the most important portion of Franklin's actual life — that inner life which is made up of thoughts and feelings — the unseen workings of the mind, the exercise of the affections, the development of character, and the progress of opinion — is either left out of the narration, or is so briefly noticed, that, without access to his correspondence as well as his more elaborate productions, but scanty means are supplied for making up a full and just estimate of the whole man, the wide range of his philosophical inquiries, or of his accumulations of various knowledge, or of the number and value of his political writings, or of the vast amount of public business he transacted, or of the great extent and importance of his services to his country.

This is deemed to be especially true in relation to his political services and writings prior to the American revolution. Few, comparatively, of the present generation, it is believed, are aware of the position which Franklin really occupied during the twenty years preceding our revolutionary struggle, or of the high rank he held as a public man, and the extent to which the principles and arguments on which that struggle was based, proceeded from his mind, or were unfolded and enforced by his pen. Indeed, as to the community of this day, generally, it may, I suspect, be fairly said, that little more is known of Franklin than that he was a remarkably ingenious tradesman, who, having a turn for philo-

M558980

sophical experiments, particularly in electricity, discovered its identity with lightning; and was, besides, an uncommonly sagacious man in regard to the prudent management of private affairs, who left behind him many wise maxims for the regulation of private life.

The labors of Dr. Sparks have, it is true, shown how inadequate is such an idea of Franklin; but the rich and ample collection of his writings, made by that gentleman, is beyond the reach of the great majority of the people, especially of the younger portion of them, who, necessarily engaged in the toilsome occupations of life, have little leisure for study, and but limited means for supplying themselves with books.

It is, therefore, for this portion of my countrymen that I have ventured to prepare this work. By condensing the account of some portions of Franklin's life, and by leaving to history the *full* recital of his political and diplomatic services, I have thought room might be found, within the compass of a single volume, to present a more complete, though still a compendious view of Franklin's life, character, and labors — of what he *was*, as well as what he *did*, throughout his entire career — than has yet been furnished in a merely biographical form. I have thus endeavored to present a full-length portrait, though it be less than the size of life. In doing this, I have dwelt with more minuteness upon the methods by which he improved his powers, than upon the specific results attained, though these have not been overlooked — more upon the processes by which he qualified himself to be useful to his country and mankind, than upon the particular rewards which crowned his services; and I have pursued this course, in the belief that the lessons his life presents would thus be rendered more available for the benefit of others, and be more durably impressed.

O. L. Holley.

August 1, 1848.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory Remarks.—Birth of Franklin.—Occupations of his Boyhood.—Love of Reading . . . . . PAGE 9

CHAPTER II.

He becomes a Printer.—First Efforts as a Writer.—Collins.—Mode of forming his Style.—Way of Life.—Mental Habits 19

CHAPTER III.

His Brother's Newspaper.—Difficulties with the Government and with his Brother.—Leaves Boston for New York 30

CHAPTER IV.

Proceeds to Philadelphia.—Incidents of his Journey 37

CHAPTER V.

First Appearance in Philadelphia.—Employed by Keimer.—Noticed by Governor Keith, who urges him to open a Printing-Office.—Goes to his Father for Aid 42

CHAPTER VI.

Reception at Home, and at his Brother's Office.—His Father refuses Aid, but treats him kindly.—Returns to Philadelphia.—Incidents by the Way 52

CHAPTER VII.

Connection with Collins.—Governor Keith's Professions.—Miss Read 61

CHAPTER VIII.

His Associates and Way of Life.—Keith induces him to go to London for Types, &c. 71

CHAPTER IX.

Arrives in London.—Keith's Perfidy.—Mr. Denham.—Works at his Trade.—Ralph.—New Associates.—Sir Hans Sloane . PAGE 79

CHAPTER X.

His Way of Life.—New Lodgings.—An English Nun.—Art of Swimming.—Becomes Clerk to Mr. Denham 92

CHAPTER XI.

Leaves London.—Isle of Wight.—Voyage Home 105

CHAPTER XII.

Changes in Philadelphia.—Letter to his Sister Jane.—Mercantile Affairs.—Death of Mr. Denham.—Returns to his Trade.—Keimer and his Workmen.—Jersey Paper-Money 120

CHAPTER XIII.

Arrives at Manhood.—His Opinions and Character.—Commences Business with Meredith.—The Junto 133

CHAPTER XIV.

Usefulness of the Junto.—Its Members.—Franklin's Industry.—Private Worship.—Establishes a Newspaper.—Its Character . . 145

CHAPTER XV.

Public Printing.—Partnership with Meredith dissolved.—Two True Friends.—Paper-Money.—Growing Reputation 160

CHAPTER XVI.

Rivals in Business.—A Match-making Scheme fails.—He Marries.—A Library established.—Domestic Affairs.—Religious Views.—Plan of Self-discipline 176

CHAPTER XVII.

Project for the Moral Improvement of Society.—Poor Richard's Almanac.—Way to Wealth 200

CHAPTER XVIII.

His Newspaper Essays.—First Printing-Office in Charleston, South Carolina.—Defence of a young Clergyman.—Acquires several Languages.—Visits his Relations.—Loses a Child.—Clerk of Assembly, Postmaster, Public Printer.—City Improvements 220

CHAPTER XIX.

Whitefield.—Religious Views.—New Partnerships.—Promotion of Education and Science.—New Store.—Military Association.—The Quakers . . . . . PAGE 237

CHAPTER XX.

Academy founded.—His Writings and Philosophical Pursuits.—Public Business.—Indian Treaty.—Colonial Postmaster-General.—Albany Convention.—Plan of Union.—Western Settlement.—Provincial Government.—Crown Point 257

CHAPTER XXI.

Aids General Braddock.—Protects the Frontier.—Gnadenhutten.—Private Sentiments and Family Ties.—Military Arrangements.—Governor Denny.—Royal Society's Medal.—Proprietary Instructions.—Lord Loudon.—First Mission to England 284

CHAPTER XXII.

Grievances of Pennsylvania.—Remonstrance to Proprietaries.—Misrepresentations Exposed.—Cause prepared for Hearing.—Excursions in England.—Family Connections.—Canada.—Visits Scotland. Mr. Strahan.—Marriage Proposed.—Miss Stevenson and her Studies.—Political Abuse.—Pennsylvania's Share of Indemnity Money from Parliament 315

CHAPTER XXIII.

Pamphlet on Canada.—Pennsylvania Case decided.—Tour in England and Wales.—New Words.—Natural History.—Philosophical Topics.—Tour in Holland.—Art of Virtue.—Latent Heat.—Water vaporized by Electricity.—Points and Knobs.—Armonica.—Literary Honors.—Return Home 343

CHAPTER XXIV.

Services Acknowledged.—Journey North and East.—Militia Bill.—Conestogo Indians.—Imbecility of Governor Penn.—Franklin upholds the Public Authority.—Confutes his Enemies.—His Second Mission to England.—Origin of the Stamp-Act.—Dean Tucker.—Reception of Stamp-Act in America.—Examination before the House of Commons.—Stamp-Act Repealed.—Value of his Services. Old Scottish Tunes 371

CHAPTER XXV.

Visit to the Continent.—True Relations of America to England.—Visits Paris.—Changes in the Cabinet.—Lord Hillsborough.—Visit to Ireland.—Lightning-rods for Powder Magazines.—He advises Firmness and Moderation in America.—The Hutchinson Letters.—Ineffectual Attempts at Conciliation.—Returns Home . PAGE 417

CHAPTER XXVI.

Death of his Wife.—Congress and Public Business.—Mission to France.—Residence at Paris.—Return to America.—Constitution of the United States.—Death and Character of Franklin . . . 447

THE LIFE

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

CHAPTER I.

HIS BIRTH AND BOYHOOD.

No man, probably, was ever more eminently and uniformly successful, throughout the whole of a very long life, in attaining the chief objects of human pursuit, than Benjamin Franklin. Of humble origin, with no early opportunities of education beyond the simplest rudiments of knowledge, bred a tradesman, and compelled by the narrowness of his circumstances to labor with his own hands for his daily bread, he nevertheless won for himself an ample estate, an illustrious reputation, and distinguished public honors.

Nor was his success the result, in any proper sense, of what is commonly called accident, or mere good fortune, any more than it was the consequences of advantages derived from high birth and powerful connections. It was, on the contrary, in a remarkable degree, the direct and visible effect of those causes, chiefly of a moral kind, which, for the encouragement of honest effort and virtuous enterprise, a wise Providence has established as the most worthy and legitimate means of attaining

success in this life ; for he was, through the favor with which that Providence regards such means, the founder and builder of his own prosperity.

His success in the acquisition of property was the just recompense of his vigorous industry, his frugality, temperance, prudence, integrity, punctuality, enlightened and sound judgment, civil manners, respect for himself as well as for others, and his frank and manly deportment. All these qualities marked his conduct in the transaction of business, and in his general intercourse with his fellow-men; and by securing general confidence, esteem, and good will, they were all instrumental to his prosperity.

His success in the pursuit of literature and science, and in the acquisition of fame as a philosopher, was also the consequence, at least in part, of some of the same qualities. For, although he could not have attained the high distinction he ultimately enjoyed as a writer and a philosopher, without the great natural abilities with which he was endowed, yet, without his active and persevering spirit, his industrious, frugal, temperate, methodical, and time-saving habits, even his great talents would have been far less available, and his philosophical genius could not have accomplished so much.

His success in political affairs, and in the acquisition of public honors, was also the natural result, not merely of his talents associated with the other attributes already mentioned, but also of additional causes inherent in his character—of his genuine public spirit, his zeal in applying himself to understand the real condition of public affairs, and the intelligence and fidelity with which he performed the duties of every public station in which he was placed; of his thorough comprehension of the political and civil rights and privileges of the

people whom he served, his sagacious and sound views of their true interests, and the steady firmness with which he maintained and promoted those interests; of his moderation, candor, and love of truth and justice; his respect for law and for all lawful authority; his stanch patriotism, and the unsurpassed moral weight and influence of his character.

Such were the sources of his success, and the elements of his greatness. Such were the causes of that steady, rapid, and almost wholly uninterrupted advance from poverty to wealth, from obscurity to renown, by which his career was so remarkably distinguished; and which not only rendered that career, during its progress, so honorable to himself and so useful to his country and mankind, but have for ever sealed it as an example, especially to his own countrymen, rich beyond parallel in lessons of practical wisdom for all, of every age, calling, and condition in life, public and private, in every coming generation.

Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on the 6th of January, old style, equivalent to the 17th of that month, according to the present reckoning of time or the new style, in the year 1706. His father, Josiah Franklin, was a native of the village of Ecton, in Northamptonshire, England; but he married his first wife, at an early age, in Banbury, in the neighboring county of Oxford, where he served his apprenticeship as a wool-dyer, with his uncle John Franklin, and where his first three children were born. In the year 1684, or early in 1685, in consequence of the intolerant and oppressive laws of that country respecting religion and public worship, he emigrated with his family to Boston, Massachusetts, where four more children were borne to him by the same wife. After her decease, he married Abiah Folger, born August 15th, 1667, the ninth child,

but the seventh daughter, of Peter Folger and his wife Mary, in the town of Sherburn, on the island of Nantucket. By this second wife, Josiah Franklin had ten children, making the whole number seventeen; ten of whom were sons, and seven daughters. Of these, Benjamin was the fifteenth child and the youngest son; and in the very entertaining and instructive narrative of his life, written by himself as far as to the fifty-first year of his age, he states the interesting and uncommon fact, that, of those seventeen children, he had seen sitting together at his father's table thirteen, who all grew up to years of maturity and were married.

According to the wise and wholesome usage of those times, the nine elder sons, as they successively arrived at a proper age, were bound by their father as apprentices to different trades, though by no means to the neglect of such instruction in the elements of useful knowledge, as could be imparted in those schools which it was the early care of the founders of New England to establish.

With Benjamin, however, it was his father's original intention to take a different course. The boy had exhibited a rare facility in learning to read. His proficiency in this particular was so remarkable, that he states, at the age of sixty-five years, in his own account of his life, that he was unable to recollect a time when he could *not* read. His fondness for books, together with his eagerness for knowledge and other indications of bright parts, prompted a disposition in his father "to devote Benjamin, as the tithe of his sons, to the service of the church." With this view, Benjamin, at the age of eight years, was sent to a grammar-school, where his progress was such as to justify the impression his early docility had made upon his friends; for, in less than a year, having risen from the middle of the class

in which he was first placed, to its head, he was transferred to the next class above, from which he was to be removed to a still higher one, at the end of the year.

But narrow circumstances and a large family soon made it apparent to his father, that the long course of study at the grammar-school and college, which would be requisite to give his son a suitable preparation for the contemplated profession, would involve an expense which he would be unable to meet, without very great difficulty, if at all. Besides, on looking more closely into the matter, he thought the proposed profession afforded, as he remarked to a friend, in the presence of Benjamin, "but little encouragement to those who were educated for that line of life." These considerations induced his father to abandon his original design; and taking the boy from the grammar-school before a year had expired, he placed him in a school devoted exclusively to writing and arithmetic, kept by a Mr. George Brownwell, who had gained much reputation as a teacher of those two essential branches of a practical business education, and who, as Franklin himself testifies, was "a skilful master, and successful in his profession, employing the mildest and most encouraging methods." In this school the lad became an excellent penman; but, to cite his own confession, he "entirely failed in arithmetic."

Benjamin appears to have remained under the tuition of Mr. Brownwell about twelve months, or the greater part of his ninth year. This was the last of his going to school; for, on his reaching his tenth year, his father transferred him to his own business, as a tallowchandler and soapboiler, to which business, though not bred to it, his father had betaken himself, on finding that, in the community where he had fixed his new home, his trade as a dyer, to which he had been regularly trained in

England, would not yield him employment enough for the support of his family. Benjamin's occupation, now, was cutting candlewicks and fitting them to the moulds, tending shop, and running upon errands.

These employments, however, were exceedingly distasteful to him; and a strong desire sprung up in him to go to sea. Having an active, enterprising spirit, and living near the water, he often resorted to it for both amusement and exercise, and grew familiar with it and fond of it. He very early made himself an expert and bold swimmer, and so dexterous in managing a boat, that whenever he and his playmates were enjoying themselves in that way, he was "commonly allowed to govern, especially in case of difficulty." Indeed, in the various enterprises in which he and his young comrades were engaged, he was generally the leader. One of these enterprises he relates, "as it shows," to use his own words, "an early projecting public spirit, though not then justly directed;" and inasmuch as it serves to exemplify that ready ingenuity in devising means to overcome difficulties, which subsequently developed itself to such a degree as to constitute one of the marked traits of his character, his own sprightly account of the performance in question is here copied.

"There was," he relates, "a salt-marsh which bounded part of the millpond, on the edge of which, at high-water, we used to stand to fish for minnows. By much trampling we had made it a mere quagmire. My proposal was to build a wharf there for us to stand upon; and I showed my comrades a large heap of stones, which were intended for a new house near the marsh, and which would very well suit our purpose. Accordingly, in the evening, when the workmen were gone home, I assembled a number of my playfellows, and we worked diligently, like so many emmets, sometimes two or three

to a stone, till we brought them all, to make our little wharf. The next morning the workmen were surprised at missing the stones, which had formed our wharf. Inquiry was made after the authors of this transfer: we were discovered, complained of, and corrected by our fathers; and, though I demonstrated the utility of our work, mine convinced me that *that* which was *not honest, could not be truly useful.*"

Benjamin continued in his father's shop, variously employed as already stated, for two years, but with a continually growing dislike to his situation; and as his brother John, who had been trained to the same business, had recently married and gone to Rhode Island, to establish himself there as a chandler, on his own account, the probability seemed, to the impatient Benjamin, fast verging to certainty that he was fated permanently to this calling. His father, who had not failed to observe his strong repugnance to this employment, and his restiffness at the prospect of continuing in it, began to feel alarmed lest his youngest, like Josiah, one of his elder sons, should gratify his inclination by breaking away clandestinely and going to sea. Such an event would have been a great grief to his parents; and to prevent it, his father earnestly sought to ascertain what occupation would be most likely to suit his disposition, and keep him in content, safety, and usefulness, at home. With this view, he frequently took the lad out with him to the workshops of the different classes of mechanics in town, in the hope of discovering, in this way, the leading inclination of his son, in reference to a point of such grave concern as that of fixing on a pursuit for life.

These visits to the workshops were very gratifying to the inquisitive and observant spirit of young Benjamin. In speaking of them, in his own narrative of his life, he

declares that "it was ever after a pleasure to him to see a good workman handle his tools." He adds, also, the more important remark, that he derived from these visits the benefit of knowing how to handle some of those tools himself; sufficiently well, at least, to execute various small pieces of work about his own premises, when a regular-bred mechanic was not conveniently to be procured; and especially did he thus secure for himself the still more material advantage of being able to construct various kinds of apparatus, for aiding his philosophical investigations, at the moment when some scientific conception, the principle it involved, and the experiment which would illustrate it, were all fresh and clear in his mind.

This testimony is instructive and valuable. The observations made, and the hints received, during those visits of the *boy*, worked like leaven among the thoughts of the *man*. The history of Franklin's philosophical inquiries, no less than his career as a tradesman, abounds with evidence of his mechanical ingenuity, and of the dexterity with which he could contrive and arrange the apparatus necessary to test the correctness of new ideas as they occurred to him. Thus, with him, speculation and experiment were enabled to go forward hand in hand; inquiry was facilitated; time was not vainly consumed in vague untested conjecture; conclusions were not only reached more promptly, but were rendered more exact and satisfactory; and the progress of actual knowledge was expedited. It seems, moreover, easy to discern, in the circumstances mentioned, the origin, at least in part, of that striking and characteristic tendency of his mind, to give a practical turn to his most abstruse theoretical ideas, and to regard as the best criterion of the value of all philosophical studies, the extent to which they can be rendered subservient to the wants, the com-

forts, the improvement, and the happiness of his fellow-men.

The choice of a trade, which, as the result of the walks among the artisans of Boston, the father made for the son, was that of *cutler;* and in pursuance of that choice, Benjamin was placed for a short time, by way of trial, with his cousin Samuel Franklin, son of his uncle Benjamin, brought up to the business in London, and recently established in Boston. But the sum demanded for the apprentice's fee, the father thought unreasonable; and it displeased him so much, that he took his son home again.

So this project for the welfare of the son, to which his father had been led by somewhat artificial means, fell to the ground; and the trade which Benjamin actually followed—that of a printer—was shortly after selected for the same general reason, which had originally prompted in his father the desire to devote him to the clerical profession; a reason founded on inclinations and capacities, which spontaneously developed themselves, when there was nothing to interfere with the simple force of nature in the one, or to bias the judgment of the other; and which were, therefore, a safer guide to the choice of a pursuit for life. That reason was what Franklin himself called his "bookish inclination." From his earliest childhood he had been "passionately fond of reading;" and the little sums of money he obtained were all expended in purchasing books. His first acquisition, he says, was a cheap set of Bunyan's works; and when he had read these, he sold them, that he might, with the proceeds, procure others, especially works of history and biography. The few books that belonged to his father contained little but polemical divinity, a very unattractive sort of reading to most people, especially the young; but Benjamin's appetite was keen

enough for the greater part even of that. Fortunately, however, he found also, on the same shelves, *Plutarch's Lives*, which he read with more avidity as well as profit; *An Essay on Projects*, by Daniel De Foe, an Englishman, the author of the famous *Adventures of Robinson Crusoe;* and *An Essay to do Good*, by the celebrated Cotton Mather of Boston. In speaking of these works, he intimates the belief that the reading of the two essays mentioned, gave him a turn of thinking which probably exerted an influence upon some of the principal events of his subsequent life.

CHAPTER II.

HE BECOMES A PRINTER.

Benjamin was now twelve years old. There being no type-foundry in the colony, his brother James, during the preceding year, 1717, had been to England to procure the necessary apparatus for a printing-office, and on his return had established himself in Boston, as a printer; and his father, still anxious lest Benjamin, in his unsettled and discontented state of mind, might gratify that "hankering for the sea," which continued as strong in him as ever, was now very urgent to have him regularly apprenticed to James. As this proposal was far more agreeable to the lad than remaining in the chandler's shop, he at length, after much solicitation, yielded to the wishes of his father; and in the course of the year he was duly indentured as an apprentice to his brother, so to continue till he should be twenty-one years old, and, for the closing year of the term, to be paid the full wages of a journeyman.

He took readily to his new employment, and soon became so expert in it as to be exceedingly useful to his brother. A freer access to a wider range of reading helped, very materially, to increase his content with the situation, which thus contributed to gratify one of his strongest propensities. His intercourse with the ap-

prentices of booksellers, gave him more frequent opportunities to borrow; and he had the prudence and good sense to preserve this privilege, by losing no time in reading the books thus obtained, and promptly returning them in good condition. "Often," says he, "I sat up in my chamber reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening to be returned in the morning, lest it should be found missing;" and he further relates that he was greatly favored, in this particular, by the kindness of a neighboring merchant, "an ingenious and sensible man," named Matthew Adams, who, in his frequent visits to the printing-office, finding his attention peculiarly attracted to Benjamin, invited him to see his library, and of his own accord proffered him the loan of any books it contained, which he might wish to read.

At this period, moreover, as he relates, a strong inclination for poetry took possession of him, and he wrote some small pieces. His brother James, thinking it might be directed to the advantage of his business, encouraged the propensity. Of the performances of our apprentice-muse, about that time presented to the public, two ballads only are specially named. One of them, entitled, "*The Light-House Tragedy*," recorded and bewailed the shipwreck of one Captain Worthilake, with two daughters; and the other sung the capture of a truculent pirate named Teach, but better known to fame by the more impressive and appropriate appellation of Black-Beard. He pronounces them "wretched stuff;" but they were printed, and the author, not known as such, however, except only to himself and his brother, was sent forth to hawk them about the streets. The *tragedy* "sold prodigiously," for the disaster was recent, well known, and affecting. His father, however, soon took down the vanity of the young ballad-writer, by

his plain and searching criticism, and by telling him that "verse-makers were generally beggars."

Though rescued thus from the perils of rhyme, he felt nevertheless a strong propensity to employ his pen; and the method, which, incited by a generous ambition, he now pursued in order to attain a ready command of his mother-tongue, and to form that clear, flowing, and happy prose style, for which he afterward became distinguished, and which proved one of the most efficient means of advancing his fortunes, was so well conceived, so practical, so remarkable in a youth but little more than twelve years old, and for that reason among others so valuable as an example, that a somewhat particular account of the method ought not to be omitted.

One of Benjamin's most intimate companions at this time, was another "bookish lad" by the name of John Collins. They both had an itch for arguing, which grew into a disputatious habit, and led to frequent and eager struggles for victory. This habit, as he admits, is by no means a desirable one, and he subsequently corrected it in himself entirely; but it served, at the time, to stimulate him to the assiduous employment of his pen, and was, in part, the means, aided again by his judicious father, of leading him to the practice which he soon resorted to, for improving his style and enlarging his command of language.

In the course of his discussions with Collins, the old question was started, whether the capacities of females fitted them for the more profound and abstruse sciences, and whether such sciences should be made part of their course of study, either for the sake of positive acquirement, or for the purpose of mental discipline. Collins took the negative side of the question, and Benjamin the affirmative, the latter, in his own account of the contest, adding—"perhaps a little for dispute's sake." They

commenced the discussion orally; but parting before the debate was ended, and not being likely to meet again for some little time, Benjamin embraced the occasion to write out his arguments and send them to Collins, who replied in the same way.

Several communications on each side had been made in this form, when they fell under the eye of Benjamin's father, who, without touching at all on the merits of the question, availed himself of the opportunity to comment freely on the performances of the young disputants, showing his son, as he candidly states, that, although he was more accurate in his spelling and punctuation, than his antagonist, yet that the latter much excelled him in elegance of expression, method, and perspicuity, and supporting his criticisms by reference to various passages. Benjamin saw that his father was right, and instead of being either offended, or discouraged, resolved to make more vigorous efforts to improve his manner of writing.

Fortunately for his purpose, about this time he came across a stray volume containing some of the celebrated essays of the *Spectator*, none of which had he ever seen before. This book he purchased, read the essays again and again, and having good sense and taste enough to perceive and admire their various merits, the desire to form his style on the model they presented, took full possession of him. The method, already alluded to, which he pursued to attain his end, he describes as follows:—

"I took some of the papers, and making short hints of the sentiments in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should occur to me.

Then I compared *my* Spectator with the *original*, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them."

This practice soon disclosed to him how comparatively limited was his command of language, and the reason of that deficiency in variety, force, and elegance of expression, which his father had so faithfully pointed out. These defects, he believed, would by this time have been considerably less, if he had continued his former practice of making verses; inasmuch as the constant necessity of finding words not only to express the intended sentiment, but to suit the adopted metre, would have enlarged his vocabulary, and given him at the same time a readier command over it. In this conviction, he next proceeded to turn some of the tales of the Spectator into verse; and then, after waiting long enough to forget the language of the original, turn his verse into his own prose.

This course of proceeding he pursued for the purpose of improving his power, variety, and fluency of *expression*. To acquire the habit of an appropriate and skilful *arrangement* of his thoughts, in composing, he "sometimes jumbled his collections of hints into confusion," and then, when their original order had been forgotten, he would, without recurring to the original, *methodize* them according to his own judgment, and write them out again, in full, in the best and fittest language he could draw from his own store. By faithfully persevering in these practices, and comparing his own performance with his model, his discernment was quickened for the detection of his faults and the amendment of them. His pains, moreover, were rewarded, not only by the gratifying consciousness of progress, but also by sometimes having the pleasure of fancying that in certain particulars of small consequence, as he modestly remarks, he had been fortunate enough to improve the

method, or the language, of his model. This encouraged him to think that he "might in time, come to be a tolerable English writer," of which, he declares, he was "extremely ambitious."

These efforts, so ingeniously devised and so resolutely continued, were crowned with marked success. The hours devoted to these exercises in composition, and to reading, were, to use his own words, "at night, or before work began in the morning, or on Sundays, when I continued to be in the printing-house; avoiding as much as I could, the constant attendance at public worship, which my father used to exact of me, when I was under his care, and which I still considered a duty, though I could not find time to practise it." In this last particular he doubtless erred; for his duty to his Maker was of higher moment than even the acquisition of a good style, or the entertainment and instruction he found in his books. But the honest frankness of his confession, and his express recognition of the duty, may be allowed, perhaps, as some compensation for his fault, and was at least an amiable trait in his character. Let the youthful reader shun the fault, and imitate the virtue.

His brother James was at this time unmarried, and hired board and lodging for himself and his apprentices. This circumstance led to another proceeding, on the part of Benjamin, of no little interest as indicating the force of his character, and his self-directing power. In his sixteenth year, or thereabouts, he met with a book by one Tryon, in favor of an exclusively *vegetable* diet. The book made such an impression upon young Benjamin, that he determined to renounce meat of every sort, and live on vegetable food alone. This rejection of flesh, besides being considered as a mere freak, for which he received frequent chiding, did in fact put the family where he boarded to some inconvenience. This

he wished to avoid, for he had a manly obliging disposition; and having informed himself of Tryon's mode of preparing several dishes, of such articles as were in common use and easily procured, particularly potatoes, rice, corn-meal for hasty-pudding, and some others, he then told his brother that if he would give him, every week, half the money paid for his board, he would board himself. The proposal was instantly accepted, and the benefits he derived from this arrangement shall be stated in his own words :—

"I presently found," says he, "that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying books; but I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and despatching presently my light repast, (which was often no more than a biscuit, or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins, or a tart from the pastry-cook's, and a glass of water), had the rest of the time, till their return, for study; in which I made the greater progress, from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension, which generally attend temperance in eating and drinking. Now it was, that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed of learning when at school, I took up *Cocker's Arithmetic*, and went through the whole by myself, with the greatest ease. I also read Seller and Sturney's book on navigation, which made me acquainted with what little geometry it contains."

About the same period he read attentively the great work of Locke *On The Human Understanding*, and another work having mainly the character of a treatise on logic, produced by the celebrated society of Port Royal, in France, and entitled, *The Art of Thinking*.

At this period, also, a treatise on English grammar came in his way, and he had the good sense and industry to avail himself of it, to obtain a more full and systematic understanding of that subject, than he yet possessed; an acquisition indispensable to his becoming, what was then the leading aim of his ambition, a good writer. As the same book also contained short treatises on rhetoric and logic, he possessed himself of what instruction they had to impart on those subjects.

The last-named treatise, indeed, proved to be, to him, by no means unimportant; inasmuch as it wrought a considerable change in one of his mental habits. The treatise on logic closed with a dispute, regularly drawn out in the form of a dialogue, and conducted in the Socratic method; that is, the method of conducting a discussion, which the ancient Athenian philosopher, Socrates, was accustomed to pursue. It may gratify some of the youthful readers, for whom this narrative of the life of Franklin is principally intended, to say a few words of the method referred to.

In ancient times, when the art of printing was not known, the great task of instruction was performed for the most part orally. Sometimes the teacher communicated his knowledge in systematic discourses, the pupils being mere listeners; and sometimes a conversational method was adopted, the teacher being the principal speaker, but permitting and inviting his pupils to put questions, and giving them categorical answers.

Socrates, the most successful teacher, as well as the wisest man, of his time, was not only accustomed to use the form of dialogue, and to give it the freest conversational turn, but he had, also, a peculiar method of leading his disciples and followers to the most strenuous exercise of *their own faculties*, in receiving the opinions and the knowledge he wished to impart. Instead of

making himself the only speaker, he was frequently not even the principal one; but, by a succession of questions, so framed as gradually to open a subject in all its parts and bearings, and, when finally contemplated together, to present a complete analysis of it, he led the minds of his pupils, step by step, to reason out for themselves the conclusions, to which he sought to bring them. The most peculiar and striking feature of this method, as Socrates employed it, was the framing of his questions, or interrogative propositions, in such manner as to draw from the pupil, or the antagonist, in the first instance, concessions, or affirmations, which, as the investigation proceeded, it was soon found, had been unwarily made, and must be materially modified, or abandoned, and the point to which they related be taken up again at the beginning, in order to amend the reasoning by the help of the new lights shed upon the subject, from the various unexpected relations in which it had been presented. In this way, the just conclusions aimed at, were at length reached; while, in the process, besides becoming possessed, in the most exact and perfect manner, of the truths which had been the main objects of pursuit, the pupil had also been taught the value of circumspection and caution; the necessity of discrimination, of not taking too many things for granted, of a patient and faithful examination of each argument in its various bearings and connexions; in short, his mind had been subjected to a most invigorating and wholesome discipline.

Soon after his perusal of the treatise on logic, Benjamin procured an English translation of Xenophon's *Memorabilia of Socrates*, which contains many specimens of the mode of investigation above described; and, as he declares, becoming charmed with it, he adopted it; dropped his habit of abrupt contradiction and posi-

tive argumentation, and assumed the much better manner of the modest inquirer.

As the best things, however, are liable to abuse, so this Socratic method of conducting an argument may, by an acute and skilful disputant, be made the means of obtaining unfair advantages over one, who, though less expert, may, at the same time, have the more just cause, be the sounder thinker of the two, and much the wiser man. Franklin confesses, that in his youthful zeal and fondness for disputation, he sometimes used his new weapon more for the sake of victory, than truth; that in his eager practice of it, he acquired an adroitness that enabled him occasionally to draw persons, superior to himself in knowledge, into admissions, which, involving consequences they did not foresee, gave him sometimes a nominal triumph, which neither himself nor his cause deserved. It is, however, in this case, as in various others which occurred in his experience, gratifying to find, that his clear good sense and general rectitude of mind enabled him at last, to separate the *use* from the *abuse*, and rejecting the latter, to retain the modest and deferential manner of discussion, which is, in truth, the most legitimate effect of the method in question, and the one which, among others, its original inventor intended it should chiefly produce.

Franklin states, that after practising it a few years, he laid it aside, retaining only the habit of expressing himself in modest terms, when advancing sentiments open to dispute; never using the word "certainly," or "undoubtedly," or any other having an air of positiveness; but employing the phrase "I conceive," or "I apprehend," or "it seems to me," and the like; a habit which, he takes the occasion to say, he found very advantageous, in his subsequent experience, whenever he sought to obtain the assent of others to his opinions,

or his measures. In this he was doubtless correct; and he justly deems this point so important, that he presses it with much earnestness. His remarks are so pithy and so well worthy of attention, that they are here repeated:—

"As the chief ends of conversation are to *inform*, or to *be informed*, to *please*, or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning and sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good, by a positive assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat most of those purposes for which speech was given to us. In fact, if you wish to *instruct others*, a positive dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments, may occasion opposition and prevent a candid attention. If you *desire* instruction and improvement *from others*, you should not at the same time express yourself fixed in your present opinions. Modest and sensible men, who do not love disputation, will leave you undisturbed in the possession of your errors. In adopting such a manner, you can seldom expect to please your hearers, or to obtain the concurrence you desire. Pope judiciously observes—

"Men must be taught, as if you taught them not;
And things unknown, proposed as things forgot."

He also recommends it to us—

"To speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence."

CHAPTER III.

HIS CONNECTION WITH HIS BROTHER'S NEWSPAPER.

On the 21st of August, 1721, James Franklin began publishing a newspaper. It was called "*The New England Courant;*" and it is spoken of by Dr. Franklin, in his own narrative of his life, as being the *second* newspaper, "The Boston News-Letter" having been the first, which appeared in America. In this latter particular, however, writing as he was, from memory, fifty years after the event mentioned, he mistook in his recollection. Dr. Sparks, the learned and accurate editor of the latest and by far the fullest and most valuable collection of Dr. Franklin's writings, has shown that James Franklin's newspaper was not the second, but the *fourth*, which made its appearance in this country; the *first* being, as above stated, the *Boston News-Letter*, commenced April 24, 1704; the *second* one, the *Boston Gazette*, started on the 21st of December, 1719; and the *third*, the *American Weekly Mercury*, first issued December 22, 1719, at Philadelphia.

Some of James Franklin's friends urged him, very strenuously, not to undertake the publication of a newspaper, there being already, as they thought, quite as many as could find support. But the people of this country, whether colonial, or independent, have always

been much addicted to newspapers; and when, in 1771, Franklin was recounting these early incidents, he took occasion to state, that the number of this class of publications had then increased to not less than twenty-five.

Among the acquaintances of James were several, who occasionally furnished him with communications, which enhanced the value of his paper, and helped to extend its circulation. As these persons frequently resorted to the printing-office, the conversation and the favorable reception of their articles by the public, stimulated Benjamin to make trial of his own pen in the same way.

To avoid all objection from his brother on account of his youth, or for any other reason, he wrote his pieces in a disguised hand, and at night shoved them under the printing-office door. The first piece having been found by James, he showed it to some of the contributors mentioned, whose remarks upon the performance, made of course without any suspicion of the writer and in his hearing, were such as gave him, to use his own words, "the exquisite pleasure of finding that it met with their approbation; and that, in their different guesses at the author, none were named but men of some character for learning and ingenuity." He modestly adds, that he was probably lucky in his judges, and that they were not really as skilful critics as he then supposed them to be.

But, whatever may have been the discernment of his critics, the success of his first effort was so gratifying, that, carefully guarding his secret, he continued in the same way to furnish communications, which proved alike acceptable to the publisher of the paper and its readers; until, as he relates, he had exhausted his stock of ideas for such essays; when he avowed his authorship, and thereupon found himself the object of increased regard and consideration from his brother's acquaintances.

But, alas! human nature is weak; and if prophets are without their due honor anywhere, it is among their own kin and in their own house. James seems to have been not a little nettled by this success of his younger brother as a writer. Though he sought to disguise so unamiable a feeling, under the worthier one of an apprehension, that the commendation bestowed on his apprentice might make him too vain, and though there may have been some reason for such apprehension, yet the harsh and bitter temper, which, about this time, began to mark his treatment of Benjamin, but too plainly evinced that his brotherly affection had become soured by some drops of envy. Instead of tempering his authority as a master, with kindness, and with that solicitude for the improvement of his apprentice, which ought, indeed, to be cherished in all such cases, and which, in this instance, were rendered still more obligatory by the ties of nature, he exercised his power oppressively; sometimes, in the excitement of passion, beating his brother, and sometimes exacting from him services which were humiliating.

Their differences were frequently laid before their father, a man of clear head, strong sense, and sound judgment; and the fact that his decision was generally in Benjamin's favor, is good evidence of the injustice of the elder brother. From a remark which Dr. Franklin makes in connexion with his account of these matters, it is obvious that James's treatment of him at the period in question, was the means of thus early wakening in his mind, that deep-felt abhorrence of arbitrary power in all its forms, which was so fully developed at a later period of his career, and which became one of the most energetic and controlling emotions of his soul.

Of the communications which appeared from time to time in the New England Courant, not a few were of a

strongly marked satirical character; aiming not merely in a general way at fashionable follies, or the absurdities of opinion and manners presenting themselves in the community at large; but applying the lash to various classes and professions, not omitting either the political, or clerical; exposing abuses in both civil and ecclesiastical administration, and hitting hard. One of these pieces, which appeared in the summer of 1722, gave such offence to the colonial Assembly, that James Franklin, the publisher, was brought before that body, on the Speaker's warrant, severely reprimanded, and sent to prison for one month. It was supposed he might have escaped the sentence, in his own person, if he would have disclosed the writer of the offensive article; but *that* he manfully refused to do. Benjamin was also taken up and examined before the council; and though he also refused to make any disclosure, he was only admonished and dismissed: on the ground, as he supposed, that an apprentice could not justly be required to betray his master's secrets. Perhaps his youth, for he was only sixteen years old, also served to render the council less rigorous.

During the confinement of James, the management of the paper devolved on Benjamin, who, notwithstanding their private differences, magnanimously resented the harsh usage his brother received from the public authorities, and gave them, in the paper, to use his own words, "some rubs, which his brother took very kindly; while others began to consider him in an unfavorable light, as a youth that had a turn for libelling and satire."

The proceedings of the colonial government, on this occasion, seem to have been, in truth, not a little arbitrary and oppressive. James Franklin was arraigned, subjected to examination, and sent to prison, on a mere general accusation, with no specific allegation of the

subject-matter of his offence, no exhibition of legal proofs to sustain the accusation, and no trial before a judicial tribunal; and when his term of imprisonment expired, his discharge was accompanied by an act still more arbitrary and tyrannical, if possible, than even his commitment; for the Assembly made an order that "James Franklin should no longer print the newspaper called the New England Courant."

When James obtained his liberation, having come to consider how he should manage to continue the publication of his newspaper, without a direct and bold infraction of the assembly's order, which would be certain to bring upon him the arbitrary power of that body with increased severity, some of his friends advised that he should attain his object by giving his paper a new name. To this, however, there were various objections, some of them having relation to the legal effect on his subscription list, and others arising from considerations of convenience; so that he adopted a different course, and one which resulted in consequences of great importance to his apprentice-brother. The title of the paper remained unchanged, but its publication was coutinued in Benjamin's name; and to protect himself against the charge of disobeying the mandate of the assembly, by printing his paper through the agency of his servant, as the law would consider it, James resorted to the expedient of surrendering to Benjamin his old indenture, with a discharge endorsed upon it, to be kept for exhibition in case of need; while, to enable him to retain the services of his apprentice, a new indenture, for the residue of the term, was executed, but kept secret. This was truly, as Franklin calls it, "a flimsy scheme;" but, though legally void, it was adopted, and the paper was printed for several months on this footing.

Before long, however, new dissensions arose between the master and his apprentice; and the impatience of Benjamin, under what he deemed the injurious treatment of his brother, led him to assert his freedom, feeling sure that James would not venture to appeal openly, at law, or otherwise, to the secret indenture. In his own account of this affair, he makes the following frank and ingenuous statement:—

"It was not fair in me to take this advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first *errata* of my life; but the unfairness of it weighed little with me, when under the impressions of resentment for the blows his [James's] passion too often urged him to bestow upon me; though he was otherwise not an illnatured man; and perhaps I was too saucy and provoking."

Benjamin, however, carried his resentment no further than simply to break off his apprenticeship; for when his brother, on finding him determined to leave, went round and spoke to the other master-printers in Boston, to prevent his procuring employment, instead of disclosing the actual condition of the indentures, he kept the secret, and turned his thoughts elsewhere, and particularly toward New York, as the nearest place in which he would be likely to obtain employment as a printer. Of his views and motives at this time, he has himself given the following account:—

"I was rather inclined," says he, "to leave Boston, when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and, from the arbitrary proceedings of the assembly in my brother's case, it was likely I might, if I stayed, soon bring myself into scrapes; and further, that my indiscreet disputations about religion, began to make me pointed at with horror by good people, as an infidel and atheist. I concluded, therefore, to remove to New York; but my

father now siding with my brother, I was sensible that if I attempted to go openly, means would be used to prevent me."

In this emergency he resorted to his friend Collins, who, at Benjamin's request, engaged a passage for him in a New York sloop then just about to sail; alleging to the captain, as the reason for his leaving Boston clandestinely, that he had an intrigue with a girl of bad character, whose parents would compel him to marry her, unless he could make his escape in this manner. "I sold my books," says he, "to raise a little money, was taken on board the sloop privately, had a fair wind, and in three days found myself at New York, near 300 miles from my home, at the age of seventeen (October, 1723), without the least recommendation, or knowledge of any person in the place, and very little money in my pocket."

CHAPTER IV.

INCIDENTS ON HIS JOURNEY TO PHILADELPHIA.

At New York Benjamin's early "hankering for the sea," if he had still cherished it, might have been easily gratified. Fortunately for him, however, if we may judge from actual consequences, that desire had left him; and having now a good trade, one for which he had acquired a liking, and in which he had become an expert workman, he lost no time in seeking for employment as a journeyman-printer. With this view he went at once to Mr. William Bradford, as the most prominent master-printer at that time in the city. This person had originally been established in Philadelphia, and was the earliest printer in Pennsylvania; but having got into a contest with Keith, then governor of that province, he had transferred himself to New York. Mr. Bradford had no occasion to hire an additional hand, but he told Benjamin that his son, Andrew Bradford, who was engaged in the printing business, in Philadelphia, had been recently deprived, by death, of his principal workman, and would, as he confidently believed, be likely to employ him.

For Philadelphia, then, though a hundred miles further, a distance by no means inconsiderable in those days, he manfully set forth; taking himself a sail-boat for Amboy, but leaving his chest, containing most of his

clothes, to be sent round by sea. While crossing New York bay, on the course for the Kills which separate Staten island from the main shore of Jersey, a violent squall split the sails of the boat, and drove it toward Long island. While thus driving, an amusing incident occurred, of which Franklin gives the following sprightly account:—

"In our way, a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger too, fell overboard. When he was sinking, I reached through the water to his shock-pate and drew him up, so that we got him in again. His ducking sobered him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his pocket a book, which he desired I would dry for him. It proved to be my old favorite author, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in Dutch, finely printed on good paper, with copper cuts; a better dress than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe; and I suppose it has been more generally read than any book, except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of, who mixed narrative with dialogue; a method of writing very engaging to the reader, who, in the most interesting parts, finds himself, as it were, admitted into the company and present at the conversation."

But, to return to the condition of the voyagers, which was by no means free from peril—the surf ran so high on the Long island beach, and the tempest was so violent, that the boat's company could neither land themselves, nor receive assistance from the shore; so, dropping anchor, they rode out the gale as well as they could; and when night came down upon them, they had no resource but to wait patiently for the lulling of the storm. Thus situated, Benjamin and the boat-master, determining to get, if possible, a little sleep, bestowed themselves as

snugly as circumstances permitted, under the hatches alongside of the still wet Dutchman. But the spray making a continual breach over the little vessel and dripping down upon them, they were soon as thoroughly soaked as their unlucky bed-fellow who had previously turned in; and in this comfortless condition they passed the night. In the morning, however, the wind went down, and they "made shift to reach Amboy before night, after having been thirty hours on the water, without victuals, and no drink but a little filthy rum, the water sailed on being salt."

After such an exposure it is not surprising that Benjamin found himself feverish in the evening. Recollecting, however, that he had somewhere seen it stated that copious draughts of cold water were very useful, on such occasions, he had the good sense to give the remedy a fair trial. This gave him, in the course of the night, so effectual a sweating, that, when the morning came, his fever was gone, and he set forth on foot for Burlington, fifty miles distant, on the Delaware river, where he expected to be able readily to obtain passage in a boat to Philadelphia.

A heavy rain fell, all that day, and when noon came he stopped at a small tavern, where he determined to rest till the next morning. On reaching this place, wet, weary, and alone, he experienced such a depression of spirits that he began to wish, as he relates, that he had never left home. His age and appearance, with the other attending circumstances, were such that he soon perceived, by the manner in which he was interrogated, that he was suspected to be a "runaway indentured servant;" and his trouble was increased by the fear of being taken into custody. He was not molested, however, and the next day, pushing stoutly forward, he reached a tavern about ten miles from Burlington, "kept by

one Dr. Brown." While taking some refreshment, Brown, says Franklin, "entered into conversation with me, and finding I had read a little, became very obliging and friendly; and our acquaintance continued all the rest of his life."

Franklin conjectured that this Mr. Brown had been an itinerant quack doctor; "for there was no town in England, nor any country of Europe, of which he could not give a very particular account." He speaks of him as an ingenious man, of some attainments in literature; but adds, "he was an infidel, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to turn the Bible into doggrel verse, as Cotton had formerly done with Virgil. By this means he set many facts in a ridiculous light, and might have done mischief with weak minds, if his work had been published; but it never was."

Benjamin stayed that night at Brown's, and the next morning, which was Saturday, proceeded to Burlington, which, however, he did not reach, till a little after the regular boats for Philadelphia had gone. While passing through the town, he had stopped a moment at the door of an elderly woman, who sold gingerbread, of which he had purchased a little to comfort him on his expected passage to Philadelphia; and now, upon learning that no boat was likely to leave Burlington for that city, sooner than the next Tuesday, he turned back from the river-side to the house of the gingerbread woman, whose look he thought had been kindly, to acquaint her with his disappointment, and ask her advice. On hearing his statement, she very hospitably offered to lodge him, till he could find a passage. To this, leg-weary as he was, he gladly assented; and as they talked together, the good woman, learning that he was a printer, proposed, in her ignorance of what would be needed for the purpose, that he should set up his business in Bur-

Franklin dining with the old gingerbread woman.

lington. She further manifested her kindness by giving him a nice dinner of ox-cheek, "accepting only a pot of ale in return."

To the youth of seventeen, weary, lonely, far from home for the first time in his life, with a dim and uncertain prospect before him, the kindness of that poor woman must have given unwonted efficacy to the refreshing virtues of the ox-cheek and the ale; for "better is a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith." It was a pleasant stage in his wet and dreary journey; and he was expecting, not discontentedly, to remain with the hospitable gingerbread-woman till Tuesday, when, as the day was closing and he was walking by the side of the river, he saw a boat coming down on its way to Philadelphia, with several persons on board, and with them he obtained a passage.

There was no wind, and it was necessary to row. About midnight, having seen nothing ahead betokening their approach to the city, some of the company, fearing they had passed it in the dark, would row no further; and as none of them knew precisely where they were, they turned into a creek, landed near an old fence, of the rails of which they made a fire that chill October night, and like Paul and his companions at Melita, they "wished for day." When the day came, one of the company recognised the place as Cooper's creek, a short distance above Philadelphia; whereupon, embarking and pulling out a little from the cover of the high banks of the creek, the city became visible, and they reached it about 9 o'clock, landing at the Market street wharf.

CHAPTER V.

PROCURES EMPLOYMENT IN PHILADELPHIA.

The personal condition of our hero, on his arrival at Philadelphia, and the appearance he made as he took his first walk in the streets of that city, derive so much interest from the lustre of his subsequent position in that community, and present so strong a contrast therewith, that his own description of himself, at that time, is here copied; and a vivid and graphic one it is :—

"I was," says he, "in my working-dress, my best clothes coming round by sea. I was dirty from my being so long in the boat. My pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no one, nor where to look for lodging. Fatigued with walking, rowing, and the want of sleep, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted of a single dollar, and about a shilling in copper coin, which I gave to the boatmen for my passage. At first they refused it, on account of my having rowed; but I insisted on their taking it. Man is sometimes more generous when he has little money, than when he has plenty; perhaps to prevent his being thought to have but little."

Having thus satisfied his self-esteem by paying for his passage, he walked into the city. Near Market street he met a boy with bread, and learning from him

Franklin's first visit to Philadelphia.

where he obtained it, he went directly to the baker's, to satisfy his hunger, as he had often done before, with a meal of dry bread. He first inquired for biscuits, expecting to find such as he had been accustomed to eat in Boston; but as the Philadelphia bakers did not make them, he asked the baker for three-pence worth of bread in any form.

"He accordingly gave me," says Franklin, "three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market street as far as Fourth street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward and ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut street and part of Walnut street, eating my roll all the way and coming round, found myself again at Market street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go further."

Having done this act of kindness—an act, which, if measured, as it ought to be, by his own personal circumstances at the time, should not be regarded merely as testimony of the unreflecting sympathy of youth, but as an earnest of that deliberate bounty of disposition, which distinguished him through life—and having been himself refreshed by his bread and water, he set forth again, and walking up the same street, he now found it thronged with neat well-dressed people, all going one way. "I joined them," says he, "and thereby was led into the great Meeting-House of the Quakers, near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round

awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and the want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when some one was kind enough to rouse me. This, therefore, was the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia."

Leaving the Meeting-House, he bent his steps toward the river again, reading faces as he went (not from impertinence, as will be seen), till he met a young man, a Quaker, whose countenance was so pleasing that he accosted him, requesting, as a stranger, to be informed where he could find lodging. The reply of the young man justified the favorable impression made by his countenance; for it manifested that considerate and honest regard for the welfare of the youthful stranger, which, though really a duty, is of a class not often performed, nor even remembered; but which showed that this young Quaker comprehended and recognised, on this occasion at least, his obligation as a *neighbor*, in that wide and generous sense, in which it is inculcated in the beautiful parable of *The Good Samaritan*. They were near a tavern with the sign of *The Three Mariners*, to which the young man pointed, saying, in answer to the inquiry, —"Here is a house where they receive strangers, but it is not a reputable one; if thou wilt walk with me, I will show thee a better one"—and then conducted him to *The Crooked Billet*. There Benjamin took dinner, and while thus engaged he there again perceived, from the manner in which he was questioned, that he was "suspected of being a runaway." When he had finished his meal he asked for a bed, and being taken to one, he threw himself upon it, without waiting to undress, and slept till called to supper; after which, he "went to bed again very early, and slept very soundly till next morning."

Having now, by abundant rest and food, recovered from the fatigue of his toilsome journey from New York, though his chest containing his better clothes had not yet arrived, he dressed himself as neatly as circumstances would permit, and went forth to call upon Andrew Bradford, the printer.

Mr. Bradford was in his printing-office, where Benjamin, to his surprise, also found with him his father, Mr. William Bradford, who, coming from New York on horseback, had reached Philadelphia before him. The old gentleman instantly recognised Benjamin and introduced him to his son, who received him very civilly, and gave him a breakfast, but did not then need another journeyman, having recently hired one. He informed him, however, that there was another printer in the place, by the name of Keimer, who had lately opened a printing-office, and who might perhaps employ him; but kindly added that if he should not be wanted there, he was welcome to lodge at his own house, and he would give him something to do, from time to time, till he could procure fuller employment.

The elder Bradford obligingly went to Keimer's with Benjamin, and on finding him in his shop, said—"Neighbor, I have brought to see you a young man of your business; perhaps you may want such a one." Upon this, Keimer, after asking a few questions and putting into his hand a composing-stick, to see how he worked, told him that just then he had nothing for him to do, but would employ him soon. Keimer had never seen the elder Bradford before, and supposing him to be a resident of the town favorably disposed toward him, conversed freely with him about his own affairs; and having, unguardedly, dropped a hint that he expected, shortly, to be enabled to secure to himself most of the printing business of the place, the crafty father,

warily avoiding any disclosure of his relationship to Andrew Bradford, gradually pumped from the communicative Keimer, a full account of his plans and prospects, as well as the personal influences and other means, on which he relied for the attainment of his objects; and having thus got all he wanted, the cunning old man went away, leaving Benjamin and Keimer together. The latter, on being informed by his new acquaintance who the old man was, experienced no little surprise and chagrin.

The whole interview, in the deceitful and dishonest craftiness practised by one of the parties, and in the weak and leaky folly with which the other betrayed his most important secrets, to a person whom he did not know, furnished to Benjamin an impressive lesson of the value of circumspection and a discreet reserve, as being only the dictate of ordinary prudence, in all intercourse with strangers upon matters of business, and as generally indispensable to the successful management of private affairs, amid the keen competitions of life.

Upon inspecting the condition of Keimer's printing-office, Benjamin found it to be very much as might have been expected, from such a lax and careless character, as the one just now disclosed, and serving to betoken it still more fully. The whole equipment appears to have consisted of "an old damaged press and a small worn-out font of English types," which Keimer himself was using in setting up an *Elegy* to the memory of Aquila Rose, the lately deceased foreman of Andrew Bradford's office; "an ingenuous young man," says Franklin, "of excellent character, much respected in the town, secretary of the assembly, and a pretty poet."

In recounting these incidents Franklin adds, that "Keimer made verses too, but very indifferently. He could not be said to *write* them; for his method was to

compose them in the *types*, directly out of his head." As there was no written *copy*, only one pair of *cases*, and little if any more *letter* than *the Elegy* alone would require, the *compositor-poet* could receive no aid, unless from his *muse*, in committing his verses to type. Benjamin, however, made himself useful by overhauling the old press, which Keimer had neither used, nor knew how to use; and when he had put it in working order, and had promised to come and *work off* the Elegy as soon as it was ready, he returned to Bradford, who set him upon a small job, and with whom, for the time being, he quartered. In the course of a few days, it being announced to Benjamin that the Elegy was *ready*, he went and put it through the press, as he had promised; and Keimer having now procured another pair of cases, set him at work upon a pamphlet, which had just been sent in to be reprinted.

Neither of these men, however, as Franklin found, had more than a very scanty knowledge of the trade they had undertaken. Bradford, it appears, had not only never been bred a printer, but was very illiterate; while Keimer, though he had received more general instruction and was more acquainted with books, knew little or nothing of any part of his business, except merely the setting of types. And though the former was doubtless the superior in point of plain sense and general repute as a citizen, yet the latter, from his peculiarities of temper and habits of thinking, was clearly the more amusing of the two, as an individual man. He was, indeed, an oddity, and his character presented not a little of the grotesque.

He had, at an earlier period, belonged to one of the strange sects of those days, called the French prophets, and he could perform their enthusiastic exercises. "At this time," however, says Franklin, "he did not profess

any particular religion, but something of *all*, upon occasion; was very ignorant of the world, and had, as I afterward found, a good deal of the knave in his composition."

As a further specimen of him it may be mentioned that Keimer had a house, but no furniture; so that he could not lodge his new journeyman, whose boarding at Bradford's, nevertheless, while working for *himself*, he disliked. He therefore procured quarters for Benjamin at the house of his future father-in-law, Mr. Read, where, as he says of himself long after, "my chest of clothes being come, I made a rather more respectable appearance in the eyes of Miss Read, than I had done, when she first happened to see me eating my roll in the street."

Being now agreeably settled, with sufficient employment to enable him, by his own industry and frugality, to provide for himself, he began to make acquaintances "among the young people of the town," particularly such as were "lovers of reading, with whom he spent his evenings very pleasantly," and endeavored to wean his thoughts from Boston as much as possible.

While thus comfortably situated, working cheerfully at his trade and contented with his prospects, some events occurred, in the course of a few months, which not only led him to revisit his native place much sooner than he had anticipated, but interrupted his present connexions, and gave a new face and direction to his affairs.

One of his sisters had married Robert Holmes, who was master of a sloop engaged in the coasting-trade between Boston and the towns on the Delaware bay and river. In the course of the winter immediately succeeding Benjamin's fixing himself in Philadelphia, the winter of 1723–'4, Holmes arrived with his sloop at Newcastle, about forty miles below Philadelphia, and

while there, hearing of his young brother-in-law, he wrote him a letter, telling him of the sorrow of his parents and other relatives, at his having absconded they knew not whither, assuring him that their affection for him was undiminished, and that everything would be arranged to his satisfaction, if he would go back to them, which Holmes earnestly besought him to do.

To this letter Benjamin wrote a full and kind reply, expressing his thanks to his brother-in-law for the affectionate regard which had prompted his letter, and placing his own reasons for leaving Boston, in such a point of view and with so much clearness and force, that Holmes became convinced, as he subsequently admitted, that Benjamin had "not been so much in the wrong as he had apprehended."

Sir William Keith, at that period governor of Pennsylvania, happened to be at Newcastle and in company with Captain Holmes, when Benjamin's letter was delivered to his brother-in-law, who, after perusing it himself, handed it to the governor and gave him some account of the writer. The governor, having read the letter, made further inquiries respecting Benjamin; and, on learning his age, manifested much surprise at finding him so young, and not a little admiration at the uncommon talents and force of character developed so early in life. He went on to say that such a youth should be countenanced and encouraged; he spoke contemptuously of the printers then in Philadelphia, and of the way in which they conducted their business; expressed his entire conviction that, if Benjamin would open a printing-office on his own account, he would unquestionably be successful; and declared that, for his own part, he would procure for him the public printing, and would render him every kind of assistance and patronage in his power.

Such, as Captain Holmes informed Benjamin when they subsequently met in Boston, was the warm and encouraging language held by the governor, on the occasion mentioned. At the time, however, nothing of all this had been made known to Benjamin, when, as he and Keimer were one day at work in their printing-office, on looking through a window near them, they saw two well-dressed gentlemen coming across the street directly toward the office, and immediately after heard them at the door below. These gentlemen were Governor Keith and a Colonel French, of Newcastle.

Keimer, very naturally taking it for granted that their visit was intended for him, and that new custom was at hand, hastened down to admit them. The governor, however, inquired only for Benjamin; and making his way up-stairs into the office, accosted the young printer with great courtesy, expressed his earnest desire to become acquainted with him, blamed him, with gracious condescension, for not having made himself known to him on his first arrival at Philadelphia, and insisted on his instantly accompanying himself and his friend Colonel French, to the tavern to which they were going, "to taste some excellent Madeira."

At all this, Benjamin was himself "not a little surprised," while Keimer "stared with astonishment." After reaching the tavern, and as they were sitting over the wine, Governor Keith announced his proposal that Benjamin should open a printing-office and go into business as a printer, on his own account. He urged, with much zeal and plausibility, the reasons for calculating on success; and both Sir William and Colonel French pledged to him their whole interest and influence, to procure for him the public printing of the two governments of Pennsylvania and Delaware.

To carry such a plan into effect, however, Benjamin

Governor Keith and Colonel French's visit.

had no means of his own, and he frankly stated that he could not count at all upon being able to obtain such means from his father. The governor met this objection by promising to write to Josiah Franklin, very fully, and to set forth the advantages of the plan, as well as the reasons why it must succeed, in such a light as would, he was confident, procure his approval and assistance; and before the interview ended, it was concluded that Benjamin should avail himself of the first vessel bound for Boston, to go with Governor Keith's promised letter to his father. Meanwhile the whole scheme was to be kept strictly secret.

This affair having been thus arranged, Benjamin continued to work for Keimer as usual; his social intercourse being varied, and his hopes cheered, by accepting, from time to time, the invitations of Sir William Keith to dine with him at his own house, on which occasions Sir William conversed with him in "the most affable, familiar, and friendly manner."

At length, near the end of April, 1724, a vessel was advertised for Boston. Governor Keith prepared a long and elaborate letter to Benjamin's father, in which he spoke of his son in the strongest terms of commendation, and urged the proposed plan, with great earnestness, as being not only every way eligible for the young printer, but as most likely to lay the foundation for his permanent prosperity; and Benjamin, assigning to Keimer, as the reason of his going, a strong desire to visit his relations, took his leave, and embarked for his native town, having completed the eighteenth year of his age, in the preceding January. In Delaware bay they struck a shoal and started a leak. This and rough weather at sea kept the pumps going, Benjamin taking his turn; but in two weeks they reached Boston in safety.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS VISIT TO BOSTON AND RETURN TO PHILADELPHIA.

It was now seven months since Benjamin had left home without the knowledge of any of his relatives, and during all that time they had received no tidings of him; for his brother-in-law, Captain Holmes, had not yet returned to Boston, since his correspondence with Benjamin, while at Newcastle, nor had he said anything concerning him, in his letters. His appearance, therefore, took his parents and other friends by surprise. They were, nevertheless, glad to see him again, and they all gave him a cordial welcome home, except only his brother James, the printer. In his own narrative, Franklin says: "I went to see him at his printing-house. I was better dressed than ever while in his service, having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lined with near five pounds sterling, in silver. He received me not very frankly, looked me all over, and turned to his work again."

This sullen coldness of James, however, did not chill the hands in the office, who received their former workfellow and companion, now returned from his travels, in a very different spirit. They gave him a hearty greeting, and crowded round him eager to learn where he had been, what he had seen, what he had been doing, and especially how he liked the place where he had been working at his trade, and what encouragements it offered in

Benjamin's Visit to James's Printing-Office.

that line. Benjamin cheerfully answered their inquiries, spoke warmly in praise of Philadelphia and of the happy life he led there, and in strong terms declared his intention to return thither. On being asked by one of the hands, what sort of money was commonly in use there, he replied by spreading a handful of silver coin before them, which, as he remarks, was "a kind of *raree-show* they had not been used to," the currency in Boston, at that period, consisting almost exclusively of paper-money. He then showed them his watch; and finally, observing the sullen demeanor of his brother, he gave them a dollar to regale themselves with, and took his leave.

These things, as it afterward appeared, offended his brother deeply; for when their excellent mother subsequently took an opportunity to speak to him of reconciliation, expressing her earnest desire to see them living together in mutual kindness, as brothers should, James replied to her, says Benjamin, "that I had insulted him in such a manner, before his people, that he could never forget or forgive it." It is gratifying to record, however, that in the last particular James was mistaken, and that the two brothers became ultimately reconciled.

Josiah Franklin, the father, read Governor Keith's letter, as might well be supposed, with no little surprise. Being a circumspect and prudent man, however, he deferred saying much about it to Benjamin, until he could see his son-in-law, Captain Holmes, to whom, when he got back to Boston, he immediately showed the letter, and made very particular inquiries of him as to Keith's character; expressing much doubt of his discretion, from his having proposed to place so young a person as Benjamin, in so responsible a situation; and entering fully into the consideration of the whole matter.

Holmes, who felt a warm regard for his young brother-in-law and had formed a high estimate of his abilities, presented, in favor of the project, such reasons as his knowledge of Philadelphia and of the prospects of business in that quarter, as well as the capacity of Benjamin and the esteem in which he was held, could supply. But the clear understanding and solid judgment of the father not being convinced, he at length, after due deliberation, gave an unqualified decision against the proposed scheme, and wholly refused to render his assistance to carry it into effect. He stated this determination, in very civil language, in a letter to Governor Keith, in which he thanked him for the countenance he had given his son, and for the patronage he had so kindly promised him; placing his own decision in the case, on the ground that his son was too young and inexperienced safely to encounter the responsibilities of a business, which required such considerable means to establish it, and so much care, discretion, and steadiness, to manage it successfully.

But, though such was the decision concerning the proposed plan, yet Benjamin was largely compensated, for the disappointment of any hopes he might have indulged, in that respect, by the deep gratification his father plainly manifested, at finding that his son had not only been able to win the notice and esteem of a person of such distinction as Sir William Keith, but that he had also been able, by his industry and frugality, to provide for himself so well, in so short a time. These circumstances, together with the embittered state of feeling on the part of James, which rendered any harmonious co-operation between the two brothers hopeless, at least for the present, induced the father to give his ready consent to Benjamin's return to Philadelphia; accompanying that consent with his advice to the young man

to check his propensity to satire; to seek the esteem and goodwill of the community by a respectful and conciliatory deportment; and to treat all subjects of grave import, with the considerate sobriety due to them, and with that deference to the feelings as well as the opinions of others, which is, in truth, the duty of all, but is peculiarly becoming in the young.

To this sound and apposite counsel, the father, as mindful of his love as of his duty, added the encouraging suggestion, that his son, "by steady industry and prudent parsimony," might, by the time he would be twenty-one, save from his earnings nearly or quite enough to set himself up in business, with his own independent means; but that if, in faithfully pursuing such a course, he should fall somewhat short of the sum requisite for so important a purpose, he would himself, in that case, supply the deficiency.

"This was all I could obtain," says Franklin, "except some small gifts, as tokens of his and my mother's love, when I embarked again for New York—*now* with their approbation and blessing." And better to the youth were those tokens of parental love, and that parental blessing, than could have been, at that period of his life, the readiest consent to the proposed undertaking, with the most ample supply of money only, to carry it forward.

The observant and sagacious father, who had long been watching the growth of his son's character, and the form it was receiving from its predominant elements as they unfolded, though he looked on with a cheering hope, yet clearly saw that the gifted youth intrusted to his care, needed a fuller experience of himself, not less than of others, and a judgment more exercised in the actual concerns of life, as well as more settled principles and habits of action, before he could safely encoun-

ter the responsibilities of business, or even secure that confidence, on the part of the community, which is as necessary as money, to permanent success in the management of private affairs. The events of only a few quick following years, showed Benjamin, very plainly, that his father had, on this occasion, decided wisely; and the union of considerate kindness, prudence, and firmness, so happily blended in the conduct of his father, throughout this whole affair, presents a beautiful example of the true paternal character.

While waiting in Boston for his father's decision, as related, Benjamin renewed his intercourse with his former companion, Collins, who was now employed as a clerk in the postoffice in that town; and who became so much smitten with Benjamin's description of Philadelphia, of his associates, and his way of life there, that he resolved to transfer himself to the same place.

Collins had accumulated what, for a youth in his circumstances was a considerable and valuable collection of books, chiefly on mathematics and natural philosophy. Leaving these to go on, by water, with Benjamin's books and under his charge, and wishing to visit some friends in Rhode Island, Collins quitted Boston first, intending to go by land to New York, where the two friends were again to meet and proceed to Philadelphia together.

It has already been related that, while Benjamin was still employed as a boy in his father's shop, his brother John had married and gone to settle himself in business, in Rhode Island. As the sloop, in which Benjamin now took passage for New York, touched at Newport, it gave him the very gratifying opportunity of again seeing John, who "received him very affectionately, for he had always loved him."

While at Newport, a friend of his brother, by the name of Vernon, who had a debt of about thirty-five pounds

due to him in Pennsylvania, gave Benjamin an order to collect and retain it, until he should receive directions from Vernon how to dispose of the money. This agency, before it was over, occasioned him a great deal of uneasiness ; and it will be again mentioned, for the sake of the practical lesson — more valuable than the money in question — which the circumstances connected with it will furnish.

The service, which, on the day of his first arrival in Philadelphia, Benjamin received from a worthy young Quaker, in the well-principled kindness with which the latter showed him to a respectable tavern, is doubtless remembered by the reader. He is now about to receive another and somewhat similar, but more important favor, from another conscientious and benevolent individual of the same exemplary class of people. The circumstances alluded to, are related by Franklin in the following passage :—

"At Newport we took in a number of passengers, among whom were two young women, travelling together, and a sensible matron-like Quaker-lady, with her servants. I had shown an obliging disposition to render her some little services, which probably impressed her with sentiments of goodwill toward me; for when she witnessed the daily-growing familiarity between the young women and myself, which *they* appeared to encourage, she took me aside and said: 'Young man, I am concerned for thee, as thou hast no friend with thee, and seemest not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is exposed to. Depend upon it these are very bad women. I can see it by all their actions ; and if thou art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger. They are strangers to thee ; and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them.' As I seemed at first not to

think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observed and heard, that had escaped my notice, but now convinced me she was right. I thanked her for her kind advice, and promised to follow it. When we arrived at New York they told me where they lived, and invited me to come and see them. But I avoided it, and it was well I did ; for the next day the captain missed a silver-spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabin ; and knowing that these were a couple of strumpets, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punished. So, though we had escaped a sunken rock, which we scraped upon, in the passage, I thought *this* escape of rather more importance to *me*."

At New York Benjamin again met his friend Collins, according to arrangement. Upon being now thrown, by the circumstances of the case, into a much closer and more constant companionship with him, than could well take place during his recent stay in Boston, he found that his friend's habits and character had undergone a most unhappy change. Through all the intimacy of their boyhood and early youth, Collins had been esteemed for his industry and sobriety, his amiable manners and love of mental improvement. He had, indeed, disclosed an uncommon genius for mathematics and the physical sciences; and having more leisure than Benjamin, for such studies, he had not only made greater proficiency in them, but had, by his attainments therein, attracted the regard of several men distinguished for their learning, and had given the most hopeful indications of future eminence.

After Benjamin's elopement from Boston, however, the misguided Collins fell into the practice of drinking brandy, which soon ripening into habitual intemperance, led, as usual, to other vices; and his friend on rejoining

him in New York, was not less grieved, than surprised, to discover that Collins had not only been drunk every day, since his arrival in that city, but had lost all his money, in gaming; so that Benjamin had to pay for the whole of his board and lodging while there, and his expenses to Philadelphia. This, however, he would scarcely have been able to do, had he not been fortunate enough to collect the money due on Vernon's order; so heavy a drain had Collins made on the purse of his liberal friend.

While in New York, an incident occurred, which made some compensation to Benjamin for the cost and annoyance occasioned by the misconduct of Collins; and served to deepen, at least in his own mind, if not in that of his companion, the sense of injury and degradation, which inevitably result from the habit of intemperate drinking. The incident was long afterward related by Benjamin as follows:—

"The then governor of New York, Burnet (son of Bishop Burnet), hearing from the captain that one of his passengers had a great many books on board, desired him to bring me to see him. I waited on him, and *should have taken Collins with me, if he had been sober.* The governor received me with great civility; showed me his library, which was a considerable one; and we had a good deal of conversation relative to books and authors. This was the *second governor*, who had done me the honor to take notice of me; and for a poor boy, like me, it was very pleasing."

Unhappy, besotted Collins! He was as highly gifted as his friend; he possessed at that period of their lives, more science, and a wider range of literary acquirements; and had become not a little distinguished for the uncommon fluency, grace, eloquence, variety, and spirit of his conversation. And though he, too, was "a poor

boy," yet, if his habits and personal condition had not rendered him, with all his rare gifts and attainments, unfit for any personal intercourse with people of cultivation and refinement, dignity of character and purity of manners, how still more remarkable would have been that interview, in the apartment of Governor Burnet's library, with *two* such representatives of the young generation then verging to maturity, pressing forward to a fame destined to be won in upholding the public liberties, or in serving and adorning their country by their literary accomplishments and performances, or by advancing the limits of human knowledge!

CHAPTER VII.

VERNON'S MONEY—COLLINS—SIR WILLIAM KEITH—MISS READ.

On reaching Philadelphia, Collins endeavored to procure a clerkship in some counting-house; but his aspect, or manner, or dram-flavored breath, or all together, must have betrayed him; for although he had brought recommendations, and though, but for his fatal habit, these recommendations would probably have been superfluous, yet his applications for a place were unsuccessful; so that he continued living at the expense of his generous friend, and at the same house with him.

It was still further unlucky for the latter, that Collins was aware of his having collected Vernon's debt; inasmuch as he managed to borrow, from time to time, in petty sums, to be returned "as soon as he should be in business," so much of that fund as to occasion, before long, no little distress to Benjamin, especially when it occurred to him that he might be suddenly required to pay it over to the owner.

His compliance, in this matter, with the importunities of Collins, was the weakest act Benjamin had yet done. Although that compliance proceeded, doubtless, from a warm feeling of kindness for an old friend, wholly unmingled with any conscious intent to do an act morally wrong, and though the language of Vernon,

when giving him authority to collect the debt, conveyed a plain implication that the money would not be wanted for a considerable time, yet the distress of mind, arising from the inborn sense of right and wrong, which Benjamin shortly began to suffer, was the sure token, that, however amiable had been his impulse, and however clear his motives from deliberate intent to injure, he had, nevertheless, weakly allowed himself to be led to do, what amounted, in point of fact, to a breach of trust.

Such, in its naked truth, was the nature of the act in in question; and it is only one of the many evidences, presented in Franklin's life and writings, of that rigorous self-scrutiny and manly candor, which strongly marked his character, that he has, in his own account of his career, taken of this affair substantially, though briefly, the same view, which is here presented somewhat more at length and with more emphasis. And it is thus presented here, for the urgent reason that, in the ordinary and daily transactions of life, there is, it is believed, no one form of error in conduct, so common as the very one here considered; not one, into which persons, in every class of society and every condition of fortune, are so frequently drawn by the specious impulses of amiable feeling, honest intention, and the various plausible fallacies of self-delusion; not one, which has, first and last, made such havoc of personal honor and good-name, of private and public obligation, or of domestic peace and happiness, as this identical error — no, not one.

For the sake of the warning, furnished by the character and termination of the brief career of a youth of such brilliant early promise, as Collins, the remainder of all that is known of him, is here presented.

In spite of remonstrance, enforced by pecuniary destitution and dependence, Collins continued to indulge his

Benjamin drawing Collins into the Boat.

thirst for strong drink; and being very irritable and insolent when tipsy, he sometimes wrangled even with the friend who had treated him so generously. An instance of this sort is related by that friend, to the following effect: They were in a boat, on the Delaware, with several other young men, one afternoon, when Collins, under the influence of spirituous liquor just enough to carry his perverse wilfulness to its utmost point of unreasonableness, refused to take his turn at the oar. "I will be rowed home," said he. "We will not row you," said Benjamin. "You must," replied Collins, "or stay all night on the water, just as you please." For the sake of quiet, the other young men said — "Let us row; what matters it?" But Benjamin, justly indignant at such arrogance, persisted in his determination not to submit to it; whereupon Collins swore he would make him row, or throw him overboard; and forthwith striding toward him on the benches of the boat, aimed at him a blow, which Benjamin avoided by suddenly bending forward; and at the same instant dexterously thrusting his head under Collins's thigh, pitched him into the river. Knowing him to be an excellent swimmer, Benjamin felt no concern about his drowning, and so kept the boat playing around him, but just out of his reach, with the design, and in the hope, of constraining him to promise that he would, if taken back into the boat, do his fair share of the rowing. But Collins, full of ire, though ready to choke with vexation and river-water, obstinately refused to make the required promise; till at last, when his strength was well nigh spent, and he began to be in some real danger, he was drawn into the boat, unsubdued, chilled, and sullen.

This affair put an end to all free and cordial intercourse between the two, who had been so long held in bands of the most intimate companionship.

Not a very long time after, the master of a vessel trading to the West Indies, who had been commissioned to procure a tutor for the sons of an opulent planter of the island of Barbadoes, fell into company with Collins, and after a very short acquaintance engaged him for the situation mentioned. Before going, he promised to avail himself of the first money he should receive, to remit the amount of his debt to Benjamin. But this he never did; and the friend, whose bounty he had so unworthily enjoyed and abused, never heard of him more.

It is saddening to think how so brilliant a light, just kindled and beginning to beam in beauty, was so prematurely quenched; and the contrast presented by the history of these two youths, in its bearing on the momentous duty of self-control, furnishes the young with a lesson, which combines the repellent force of the most solemn warning, with the healthful and cheering incitements of the most honorable and splendid success.

But, to return from this digression, Benjamin, it may well be presumed, took the earliest opportunity, after coming back to Philadelphia, to wait on Governor Keith and deliver his father's letter. Sir William, when he had possessed himself of the views which the letter presented, insisted that the writer was over-cautious, and did not give sufficient weight to the intrinsic differences in the personal characters of men; that "discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it;" but, said he to Benjamin, "since your father will not set you up, I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able. I am resolved to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed."

Sir William spoke, on this occasion, as he had spoken and acted from the beginning, with such cordial warmth

and apparent sincerity, that Benjamin could not doubt that he was thoroughly in earnest. He therefore looked on Governor Keith as one of the best and most generous of men; and went with a cheerful spirit to prepare a list of such articles, and their quantities, as would be requisite to open a printing-office, on a moderate scale, but still sufficient for the business of the place, at the time; and amounting, by his estimate, to about one hundred pounds sterling.

The list being laid before Sir William, he expressed his approval of it; but suggested that Benjamin had better go himself to London, for the materials wanted, inasmuch as, by being on the spot, he could not only suit himself exactly, both as to variety and quality, but he could form acquaintances, and make arrangements for correspondence in business, which would prove very advantageous to his permanent interests.

As the correctness of such a view could not be gainsaid, the governor concluded the interview, by telling Benjamin to get himself ready to go out in the *Annis*, which was the regular packet between Philadelphia and London, and, in those times, made a passage, each way, annually.

As the *Annis*, however, was not to sail for several months, Benjamin, keeping his own counsel, continued working as usual for Keimer; but chafing in spirit, with self-reproach, on account of the money he had permitted Collins to wheedle from him, and tormented with growing apprehension of a sudden draft upon him, from Vernon, for the whole sum. Fortunately, however, Vernon did not make that draft till some years later.

It will be recollected that Benjamin, while working, as an apprentice, for his brother James, adopted the practice of feeding exclusively on vegetable diet. He adhered faithfully to that practice, until, on his late voy-

age from Philadelphia to Boston, circumstances occurred which induced him to give it up. On that voyage, the vessel, when off Block island, was becalmed; whereupon the sailors, getting out their fishing-tackle, went to catching cod, of which they took a great many.

Though Benjamin had, for a considerable time, been holding the doctrine of his dietetical guide, Tryon, that it was wrong to make food of anything that once had lived, and though he had, therefore, regarded the taking of these cod, as an indefensible destruction of the great gift of life; yet he had, also, at an earlier day and for a longer period, been exceedingly fond of fish; and when the sailors, quitting catching for cooking, made a fry of some noble cod fresh from the deep cool waters, the warm steam from the pan greeted his smell with so rich a flavor, as mightily to shake his *exclusive* faith in vegetables.

While he was still balancing, as he relates, between principle and inclination, he suddenly recollected that, when these cod were opened, he saw smaller fish taken from their stomachs. This flagrant fact determined him. If these fish feed upon each other, why might not *he* feed upon *them;* and so, satisfying his *understanding* with the law of retaliation, he straightway satisfied his *appetite* with a delicious meal of fried cod.

From that time forward, he ceased to exclude fish, or flesh, from his customary food; resorting to a merely vegetable diet, only when the state of his health seemed to ask for some temporary change of regimen. "So convenient a thing it is," he pithily remarks, "to be a *reasonable* creature; since it enables one to find, or to make, a *reason* for everything one has *a mind to do.*"

During the months in which Benjamin was waiting, in hope, for the *Annis* to sail for England, his life passed on both pleasantly and usefully; and it will be alike en-

tertaining and proper to present an outline of some of its more salient features.

He lived, in the main, on good terms with Keimer; for although that eccentric person had a whimsical mind, and a suspicious and irritable temper, yet, as he knew nothing at all of Benjamin's plans, seldom did anything interpose itself to disturb their harmony. The young journeyman, moreover, was a quick and shrewd discerner of character, and thoroughly understanding that of his employer, he had, in this respect, greatly the advantage; so that, while dealing with him most uprightly in all matters of business, in which he was exceedingly useful to him, yet would his quick perception and good-natured enjoyment of the ludicrous, occasionally lead him, in various harmless forms, to make his employer's peculiar humors and ways of thinking tributary to his own amusement.

Keimer, without any analytical power of mind, or any real ability to reason, had, nevertheless, what is quite as common with such persons, as with truly skilful and profound logicians, an inordinate propensity to argumentation — a propensity which no more implies the power of legitimate reasoning, than cunning implies true wisdom — and, for a time at least, nothing seemed to please him so well as to draw Benjamin into discussion. When thus engaged, the latter would ply his antagonist with the *Socratic* method, in the use of which, as we have seen, he had made himself very adroit. Pressed by this mode of conducting a controversy, Keimer pretty soon began to find himself so frequently and unexpectedly entangled in his own concessions, by means of questions, the bearings of which he did not perceive, and which seemed to him, when put, wholly unconnected with any point under consideration, but which were shortly seen to be gradually involving the

whole issue, and bringing him into contradictions and other difficulties, that at last, says Franklin, he grew so ridiculously cautious, that he would hardly answer the most common question, without first asking—"What do you mean by that?—What do you intend to infer from that?"

The readiness with which Benjamin, in these debates, vanquished his antagonist, co-operating with the exalted self-esteem of the latter, led to a singular result. Keimer received so profound a conviction of the subtlety and skill which had discomfited *him* and which must, therefore, his self-complacency inferred, yet more surely overmaster *others*, that he now announced, with much gravity, a scheme he had, he said, been long meditating, for founding a new sect in religion; and he zealously urged his young journeyman to unite with him to carry it into effect. What the particular vagaries of Keimer's brain were, which were to constitute the fundamental articles of the new faith, Franklin has very properly deemed not worth recording; but whatever they may have been, Keimer himself was to be the great propounder and teacher of the new doctrines, while his young associate was to do the controversial part and shut the mouth of cavil.

Of course Benjamin's native common sense did not permit him to give a moment's serious thought to the crazy project; but thinking it fair game for ridicule, he affected to listen to it, with the view of extracting some amusement from its projector. Among the external badges, which were to mark the disciples of the new creed, Keimer proposed to adopt two of his own personal customs, that of wearing the beard entire, and that of observing the seventh day of the week as the sabbath.

Benjamin, even at that early age, entertained but a

poor opinion of all those eccentric whimsies about things merely external and formal, which contain no germ of moral improvement, to compensate for the inconvenience they occasion, by clashing with the prevalent usages of society; and still less did he value anything merely for its oddity. A stipulation, however, not to "mar the corners of the beard," could not much embarrass a youth of eighteen; and the observance of Saturday as a day of rest, could occasion little inconvenience, while he continued at work where he then was; so he allowed himself to accede to the two propositions mentioned, but only on the condition, however, that the destined founder of the new sect should, on his part, renounce all animal food.

Keimer winced at this condition, for he was, as it appears, uncommonly partial to meat, and a voracious feeder. "I doubt my constitution will not bear a total abstinence from flesh"—said the meat-loving and reluctant Keimer. "O, yes it will, and you will be the better for it"—said Benjamin. For the sake of the new religion and the general welfare, however, the Reformer, after some hesitation, consented to make the proposed trial, provided his fellow-laborer would join him in it; to which the latter promptly agreed.

The compact thus made, was adhered to, as Franklin states, for three months; the provisions being procured, cooked, and served to them, by a woman dwelling near by, pursuant to a list, furnished by Benjamin, describing "forty dishes into which there entered neither fish, flesh, nor fowl." This diet had the further recommendation that it cost them barely "eighteen-pence sterling each, per week." Benjamin went on very comfortably under the new victualling compact; "but poor Keimer suffered grievously, grew tired of the project, longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and ordered a roast

pig." Benjamin and two other acquaintances were invited to the feast on this occasion; but the dinner happening to be served rather early, Keimer was unable to resist the savory temptation, and before the guests arrived, *eat up the pig*.

In relating these incidents Franklin states that, in the subsequent course of his life, he "kept Lent," at various times, in the strictest manner, abruptly quitting his ordinary diet, and as abruptly returning to it; and having done so without any injury whatever, he concluded that the usual advice to make such changes gradually, was of little value.

Another affair, however, was going on, at this period, of far more serious import to the parties, than anything connected with the fantastic Keimer. This was Benjamin's courtship of Miss Read, for whom he had begun to cherish "a great respect and affection, and had some reasons to believe that she had the same" for him. But they were yet very young, each having seen little more than eighteen years, and he being about to undertake a distant voyage, uncertain as to its results.

Under such circumstances, the prudent mother of Miss Read interposed so far as to caution the young people against involving themselves in any needless engagements, which would, at that time, be deemed injudicious, and which might subsequently become the occasion of embarrassment and regret; adding that, however much disposed they might be to marry, and however unobjectionable such a union might be ultimately considered, it would be best, at least, to defer it, until after Benjamin's return from England, when his condition would be more settled, and he would better understand his own prospects. The mother's advice was substantially followed.

CHAPTER VIII.

BENJAMIN'S WAY OF LIFE—SAILS FOR ENGLAND.

By this time, also, Benjamin had formed several valuable as well as agreeable acquaintances among persons of his own sex and time of life. Of the young men, who had become his principal and most intimate associates, he has given the names of Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph —"all lovers of reading"—and obviously, from his account of them, all of them possessing more than ordinary abilities and attainments. Osborne and Watson, it appears, were clerks in the office of Charles Brockden, a very reputable conveyancer; and Ralph was a clerk in a respectable mercantile house.

Of Watson he relates that he "was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; and although the other two were "more lax in their principles of religion," yet, in other respects, they seem clearly to have been attractive companions. Osborne is described as "sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but, in literary matters, too fond of criticism;" Ralph as being easy and graceful in his manners, ingenious, eloquent, and a particularly agreeable talker; and both, not only great lovers of poetry, but occasionally trying their own skill in verse.

In the occasional conversation of these young men,

respecting their tastes, and views in life, Ralph, it appears, showed a strong predilection for poetry, and declared his confident belief that, by cultivating it assiduously, he could win both fame and fortune. Osborne thought differently, and urged his friend to apply himself strictly to business; insisting that he had no true genius for poetry, but that by making himself an accomplished merchant and accountant, he might, though without capital, obtain the agency of some wealthy house, and in time become a partner, or acquire the means of trading on his own account. Franklin adhered to the opinion, which, as has been seen, he had formed years before, that it was useful to cultivate poetry, or practise versification, for the sake of acquiring a readier command of language and a more varied power of expression; but no further.

The declaration of these opinions led to a proposal that they should, at their next meeting, each present a performance in verse, composed by himself, to be submitted to their respective critical remarks, for the sake of mutual improvement. The object being improvement in language and style simply, it was agreed that invention, or originality of conception, was not to be considered; and, in order to confine themselves strictly to the end in view, they appointed for their task, the eighteenth psalm, describing the descent of Deity, to be rendered in verse.

A day or two before the next meeting, Ralph called on Franklin, showed him his performance, which was exceedingly well done, and finding that Franklin had been too busy to prepare anything himself for the meeting, Ralph proposed a trap for Osborne, to expose his hypercritical spirit, and bring home, to his own consciousness, a clear perception of his undue propensity to cavil. "Osborne will never allow the least merit in

anything of mine," said Ralph, "but makes a thousand criticisms out of mere envy. He is not so jealous of you. I wish, therefore, you would produce this piece as yours. I will pretend not to have had time, and will produce nothing. We shall then hear what he will say to it." This was agreed to; and Franklin transcribed the piece, so that it should appear in his own hand-writing. The result is given in Franklin's own words, as follows:—

"We met; Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was much better; Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He had himself nothing to produce. I was backward, seemed desirous of being excused, had not had sufficient time to correct, &c.; but no excuse could be admitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated; Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and joined in applauding it. Ralph only made a few criticisms, and proposed some amendments; but I defended the text. Osborn was severe against Ralph, and told him he was no better able to criticise than compose verses. As these two were returning home, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favor of what he thought my production, having before refrained, as he said, lest I should think he meant to flatter me. 'But who could have imagined,' said he, 'that Franklin was capable of such a performance; such painting, such force, such fire! In common conversation he seems to have no choice of words; he hesitates and blunders; yet how he writes!' When we next met, Ralph disclosed the trick, and Osborne was laughed at." A sufficiently efficacious remedy, one would think, this must have been, against the further exhibition of Osborne's hypercritical spleen, at least in presence of the same circle of companions.

In the absence of any recorded notice of the particular studies of young Franklin, at this period of his life, these anecdotes may furnish some indication that his course of reading must probably have been as varied and extensive, as the intervals of his regular employment, and the access to books, at that day, in the city where he dwelt, would permit; and they seem to claim insertion, not only for that reason, nor merely as amusing incidents, but still more as illustrations of character and of some of the influences under which his own was then unfolding.

Of the young men just introduced to the reader, as the names of Watson and Osborne do not occur, in connection with the subject of our narrative, at any subsequent stage of its progress, it may be interesting to state, that Watson, to use the words of Franklin, "died in his arms a few years later, much lamented, being the *best* of the set;" and that Osborne established himself as a lawyer, in the West Indies, where he acquired both distinction and wealth, and yet died in the prime of manhood.

The connection of Ralph, with young Franklin, continued much longer, and was attended by more serious consequences, which, however, do not yet call for notice. It will be sufficient to state, here, that his inclination to give himself to poetry, was naturally and not a little strengthened by the incident already related; and, in spite of dissuasion, "he continued scribbling verses," says Franklin, "till Pope cured him." He went, as will be seen, with Franklin, in the Annis, to London, where he afterward passed most of his life. He acquired considerable prominence as a prose writer, and lived by his pen, which he employed frequently in the service of the ministerial party. Besides numerous political pamphlets, and some more elaborate historical

performances of conceded ability, he produced various dramatic pieces and poems of less merit. Among these last, was a poem entitled "*Night*," and one called "*Sawney*," the latter containing some abuse of Pope and Swift; and the *cure* above alluded to, was administered in the celebrated "Dunciad," in the following couplet:—

> "Silence, ye wolves, while *Ralph* to Cynthia howls,
> Making *Night* hideous; answer him, ye owls!"

These particulars are gathered chiefly from a note compiled by the vigilant and learned editor of the latest, most complete and valuable edition of the writings of Franklin, where it is also stated that Ralph was, "for many years, the confidential associate of ministers and courtiers;" and that a little before his death, which occurred in 1762, the moderate pension, on which he had long lived, was increased to six hundred pounds sterling, through the influence of Lord Bute.

While Franklin was thus working for Keimer, and occupying the greater part of his leisure with books, and with the companions mentioned, Sir William Keith continued his friendly attentions to him, inviting him frequently to his house, often adverting to the plan of setting him up in business, and always treating it as "a fixed thing," awaiting only the coming on of time, to be fully accomplished. Sir William was to furnish him, not only with various recommendatory letters to efficient and influential friends in London, but also with a letter of credit, on which the money to pay for the press, types, and other requisite materials for the new printing-office, was to be obtained.

These very essential documents, however, though often promised, were as often delayed, from time to time, till the *Annis* was on the very eve of sailing; and even then, when Benjamin made his last call, to receive the

letters and take leave of the governor, instead of being enabled to do either, Sir William sent out his secretary to say that he was just then extremely busy, but that he would be down at Newcastle sooner than the ship, and that the letters should there be delivered to him.

Benjamin, therefore, after exchanging pledges of affection and fidelity, with Miss Read, and bidding his other friends good-by, went on board, and the packet dropped down the Delaware to Newcastle. Governor Keith was, indeed, there; but when Benjamin once more went to his lodgings, his secretary again presented himself, with the deep regrets of the governor, that business of the utmost importance, demanding his whole attention and immediate execution, so engrossed him, that it would prevent his seeing his young friend, but that he would send the letters for him on board in good season, and wished him a pleasant voyage and a speedy return. With this parting message, Benjamin, not a little puzzled, but still confiding, repaired on board the Annis.

The other persons, who had taken passage for England in the same vessel, were Andrew Hamilton, an eminent lawyer of Philadelphia, and his son James, who, some years after, became governor of the province of Pennsylvania; a Quaker merchant named Denham; Messrs. Oniam and Russell, iron-masters, whose works were situated in Maryland; and James Ralph, with whom we already have some acquaintance. The entire cabin of the Annis had been engaged by these persons, except Ralph; so that he and Benjamin had to bestow themselves in the steerage, and being unknown to the other passengers, they were supposed to be persons of little consequence.

While the packet was waiting at Newcastle, however, the Hamiltons returned to Philadelphia, the father having been drawn back "by a great fee, to plead for a seized

Benjamin going on Board the Annis.

ship;" and Governor Keith's friend, Colonel French, coming on board just before the Annis set sail, and being observed to pay marked respect to Benjamin, it produced such an improved estimate of the quality of the young man, that he and his friend Ralph soon received an invitation from the other passengers, to take the berths and other accommodations in the cabin, which had been so opportunely vacated by Mr. Hamilton and his son. This invitation was gladly accepted.

It being understood that Colonel French had brought on board despatches from Governor Keith, Benjamin took it for granted that now, at last, with *them* had come the long-promised letters intended for himself; and naturally wishing to have them in his own keeping, he applied for them to the captain of the ship. He was answered, however, that his letters with all others going out, were in the bag together, and that they could not then be conveniently got hold of; but that, before landing in England, he should have ample opportunity to obtain possession of them. Contenting himself with this assurance, he laid aside all further concern on that score, and opened his mind to the reception of such new impressions as the voyage and its incidents should furnish.

Only a very brief notice of this outward voyage has been left by Franklin. From that, however, it appears that the company in the cabin fared uncommonly well, inasmuch as the stores provided by Mr. Hamilton, being left in the ship, made the supply unusually abundant; and the passengers found themselves sufficiently agreeable to each other, to render the passage a pleasant one inboard; but in other respects it was made uncomfortable by the general prevalence of rough weather. Of the incidents which occurred on board, by far the most interesting one to Benjamin, was his acquisition of the

friendship of his Quaker fellow-passenger, Mr. Denham — a friendship, which soon proved exceedingly useful to him, and ultimately led to a closer and more important connection, and which continued without interruption, or disturbance, till it was forever sundered by death.

While going up the British channel, Benjamin had the promised opportunity to overhaul the letter-bag. Finding several letters bearing his own name as the person who was to take charge of them, with some others, which, judging by the names of those to whom they were addressed and other tokens, seemed intended for his use, he took possession of them. But, alas for the good-faith of pretended friendship and for the hopes it had inspired, the sequel showed that all these letters were utterly worthless, and that this youth had been cruelly cheated by the smooth-tongued deceiver, who was then the governor of Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER IX.

RESULT OF THE VOYAGE—PENJAMIN'S FIRST EXPERIENCES IN LONDON.

The passengers of the Annis reached London in safety, on the 24th of December, 1724; and Benjamin wasted no time before making use of the documents, from which he had been induced to expect so much benefit. One of the letters bearing the address of a Mr. Basket, designated as the King's printer, and another being directed to a stationer, whose name is not given, Benjamin, naturally inferring, from the occupations of the men whose names they bore, that these two letters would be found to relate, most directly and materially, to the main object of his voyage, selected them for immediate delivery.

The stationer happening to be nearest by, to him Benjamin first proceeded. Finding him in his shop, he handed the letter to him, saying, as he did so, what he of course took for granted was the fact, that it was from Sir William Keith, governor of the province of Pennsylvania. The stationer remarked that he did not know any such person, but took the letter, and opening it cast his eye upon the signature, when he suddenly exclaimed —"O, this is from Riddlesden! I have lately found him to be a complete rascal; and I will have nothing to do with him, nor receive any letters from him." So,

handing back the unread epistle, "he turned on his heel," says Franklin, "and left me, to serve a customer."

In short, the upshot of this affair was, that not one of the letters, on which so many hopes had been built, was written by Keith; and now looking back upon his conduct, in the new light poured upon it, Benjamin began, for the first time, to entertain doubts of the honesty and good faith of Sir William Keith, the governor of Pennsylvania.

Startled by such a result, and filled with apprehensions, arising from the predicament, in which that result placed him, Benjamin straightway sought out his late fellow-passenger, Denham, and laid the whole matter, from first to last, fully before him. The intelligent and fair-minded Quaker merchant at once let his young friend into, what he was not before aware had been a secret to him — the real character of his professing patron. Mr. Denham told Benjamin that there was not the slightest probability that Keith had either written, or had seriously intended to write, a single letter for his benefit, notwithstanding all his solemn pledges and hospitable attentions; that nobody, having any knowledge of Sir William and his ways, placed the smallest dependence on his most earnest assurances; and he laughed heartily at the very idea of a *letter-of-credit* from a man, who possessed not a particle of that valuable commodity for his own use, or for the service of others.

Faithless, heartless, and disgraceful as the conduct of Sir William Keith was in this affair, yet, after all, his character, in its general elements at least, was not, we suspect, a very uncommon one. He seems to have been one of those sociable, good-humored, and smiling, but selfish and thick-skinned men, who, though possessing some agreeable and useful qualities, and often exhibiting considerable talents for business, yet have no

very clear perception of many of the differences between right and wrong, and appear unable to recognise them, unless in a coarse way and in the broadest cases ; who, though perhaps seldom actuated by any cherished malice, yet have no well-settled moral principles for the uniform regulation of their own conduct; men of cold affections, and little real sympathy, but of sanguine temperament, lively animal spirits, much self-complacency, addicted to company, voluble talkers, fond of notoriety, with but little sense of honor and shame, ready with expedients, and eager for place and influence.

Such men are very apt to play the patron, not so much, however, for the sake of their clients, as for their own; and some calculation of advantage to himself, seems very likely to have suggested to Keith, the expediency of affecting to patronise Benjamin, and to have led him to obtrude himself and his proffers of assistance upon a youth of so much promise.

Franklin closes his account of Sir William and their connection, with a short comment which, considering the heartlessness and wanton cruelty of Keith's usage of him, bears the most unequivocal testimony to that spirit of candor and forbearance, which marked and adorned his own character, through life.

"What shall we think," says Franklin, "of a governor playing such pitiful tricks and imposing so grossly on a poor ignorant boy? It was a *habit* he had acquired. He wished to please everybody; and having little else to give, he gave expectations. He was, otherwise, an ingenious and sensible man ; a pretty good writer ; and a good governor for the people, though not for his constituents, the Proprietaries, whose instructions he sometimes disregarded. Several of our best laws were of his planning, and passed during his administration."

But the fraud, which had been practised upon Benjamin, was not the only piece of treachery brought to light by this letter of Riddlesden. This man was an attorney in Philadelphia, and both Mr. Denham and Benjamin were as fully aware as the stationer, that Riddlesden was a thorough-going knave. His letter, written under the expectation that Andrew Hamilton, who had been suddenly recalled from Newcastle to Philadelphia, was going to England in the Annis, betrayed the fact that a plot was going on, to injure Mr. Hamilton, and that Keith and Riddlesden were the plotters.

Mr. Denham, who was a friend of Mr. Hamilton's, very justly thought that gentleman should be informed of the mischief that was hatching; and when he reached London, as he did, not very long after, in another vessel, Benjamin called on him and gave him the letter. "He thanked me cordially," says Franklin many years later, "the information being of importance to him; and from that time he became my friend, greatly to my advantage afterward, on many occasions."

By the shameful and wanton perfidy of Keith, thus, without an acquaintance in London, except one or two of his own countrymen, who were shortly to return home — with very scanty means of support, and these soon to be exhausted, unless he should be able to procure employment, was Benjamin, a youth of eighteen, a stranger from another land, left exposed to the perils of a great city. Happy for him, was it, then, that he had a trade. For a poor unfriended youth, without money, or connections, there is, under Providence, no better reliance than the possession of one of those honest and useful mechanical arts, which belong, permanently, to the very structure of civilized society, and are essential to the ordinary and daily recurring wants and uses of the community. With such a resource, no hon-

est and right-minded person, young, or old, needs despond, while he has health, and cherishes a spark of genuine self-respect, or has any just sense of the true respectability and virtue of useful self-sustaining labor.

With these manly sentiments in his breast, and with the advice and sympathy of his friend Denham to encourage him, Benjamin at once set about finding employment. This he soon procured, at Palmer's, "a famous printing-house in Bartholomew Close," where he remained nearly a year. Stranger as he was in London, the only person with whom he could have anything like intimate companionship, was Ralph, and they were a great deal together. They took lodgings in that part of the city called Little Britain, at three shillings and sixpence sterling a week for each.

At this time, Ralph acquainted Benjamin with his determination never to return to Philadelphia. His whole stock of money having been exhausted in paying the expenses of his voyage, he was now destitute; and though he had some family relatives in London, yet they were too poor to render him any assistance. He had, therefore, no resource but dependence upon Benjamin, who possessed a small fund of fifteen pistoles, about fifty dollars, and who furnished his friend with what money was necessary for his subsistence, while he was looking about for employment.

This connection proved, as in the case of Collins, another considerable burden, for the time being, to Benjamin; and, ultimately, he had to sustain a total loss of the money thus generously furnished; for Ralph, after trying in vain to procure an engagement, as a play-actor, at one of the theatres, then proposed to a publisher, to write for him a weekly paper on the plan of the Spectator. His terms, however, not proving acceptable, he next sought employment, as a scrivener, among

the stationers and lawyers of the Middle Temple, and its purlieus; but still without success, as he could find no vacancy.

To Benjamin, with his trade, in which, for so expert and efficient a workman as he was, employment might be considered certain, the danger of not being able to provide a decent and comfortable subsistence, was scarcely worth a moment's anxiety. In such a city as London, however, there were other perils, of a graver nature, needing more energy of character and more strength of virtuous resolution, in a youth of eighteen, of social disposition and ardent temperament, to pass safely through; and in reference to these perils, his companion Ralph was no help to him.

During the customary working hours, Benjamin was sufficiently diligent and attentive to his duties as a journeyman. His evenings, however, were generally, at this period, devoted to mere diversion; especially to visiting the play-houses and other places of public amusement. On these occasions Ralph was usually his associate; and as he had himself to defray the expenses of both, his pistoles rapidly melted away, together with a considerable portion of his wages besides. Ralph seemed to have forgotten the wife and child he had left behind him at Philadelphia; and Benjamin, as he subsequently confesses, gave little attention to the duties imposed on him, by his engagements with Miss Read, to whom he wrote "but one letter, and *that* was to let her know he was not likely soon to return."

This was an unwarrantable neglect of duty; and long after, in writing his own account of his conduct, in this respect, he had the honesty to admit it; pronouncing it "one of the great *errata* of his life, which he should wish to correct, if he were to live his life over again." In point of fact, his inability to go back to

Philadelphia, was owing to the expenses incurred by himself and his companion, which prevented his accumulating a sum sufficient to meet the charges of a return voyage. But the want of money was not now the chief impediment in the path of his duty. Notwithstanding that want, he could easily have performed at least a part of his obligations, by keeping up a correspondence with one to whom he had plighted his love and truth; and the mere fact that he disregarded an obligation so plain and so easy to fulfil, speaks, with more emphasis, than even his own honest confession, of the perils to which the perfidy of Keith had exposed him, and of the downward tendencies of that pagan manner of living, the temptations of which he was now beginning to feel with bounding pulses and sparkling eyes. There is, in truth, nothing in human life that produces such intense selfishness, or so soon hardens the heart and benumbs the conscience, as those forms of self-indulgence, which are found exclusively in the gratification of the senses and in mere amusement.

In the same house in Little Britain, in which Benjamin and Ralph lodged, a young woman, who was engaged in business as a milliner, also had lodgings, though she kept her shop in another building in the neighborhood. She is designated in Franklin's narrative, simply as Mrs. T.; and she seems to have been a young widow with one child. She is described as being a sensible and sprightly person, of attractive manners, and of uncommonly agreeable conversation. Ralph not unfrequently passed his evenings in reading plays to her; and their intercourse shortly became too intimate to continue innocent. It was not long, therefore, before she changed her lodgings, and he soon joining her, they dwelt together for several weeks. But he not having yet been able to procure any regular employ-

ment, and the avails of her business being too scanty to support both themselves and her child, he left London, after a while, to seek employment, in the country, as teacher of a village-school, for which he felt himself amply qualified, by his skill in penmanship, arithmetic, and keeping accounts.

With the false pride, however, which formed a controlling element of his character, though not ashamed of his licentious conduct, he deemed the useful and therefore honorable occupation of teaching a school, beneath his deserts and dignity. To prevent his being ever traced back to that occupation, when, at any subsequent period, he should have attained a position more worthy, in his own estimation, of his capacity and merit, he dropped his true family name, and did Franklin "the honor," as the latter words it, "to assume *his*." This circumstance was disclosed to Benjamin by receiving, not long after, a letter from Ralph, dated at an obscure village in Berkshire, informing him that he was engaged in teaching some ten or twelve boys to read, write, and cipher, for sixpence a week each; recommending also his friend, the milliner, to Benjamin's kind offices, and requesting him to address his letters to "*Mr. Franklin, schoolmaster*," at the village alluded to.

The instruction of his little pupils was, of course, a light task for Ralph's active mind, and in the leisure and seclusion of his present situation, turning to what we have already seen was his favorite pursuit, he undertook the composition of an epic poem. The subject and title of the poem are not stated; but in his frequent letters to Benjamin he enclosed copious specimens of it, requesting the favor of his remarks and strictures thereon, in the spirit of free and independent criticism. Benjamin complied, with freedom and candor, but at the same time, and with right judgment, too, "endeav-

ored to discourage his proceeding." With this view, he took the trouble to transcribe the greater portion of a then newly-published satire from the pen of the celebrated Dr. Young, author of the "*Night Thoughts*"— the work by which its author is most generally known in this country, being held in high estimation by the more sedate and meditative lovers of poetry among us; and which, though containing some offences against taste, particularly in its occasional extravagance of expression, does, nevertheless, abound with lofty and elevating views, and with just as well as striking and brilliant thoughts and images, presented, for the most part, in a style of remarkable vigor and varied beauty. The satire, so much of which was thus disinterestedly transscribed for Ralph's benefit, "set in a strong light," says Franklin, "the folly of pursuing the muses; but all was in vain, and sheets of the poem continued to come, by every post."

About this time, moreover, the female already mentioned, who had forfeited the favor of her friends and lost her business, by means of her connection with Ralph, often, in her distress, sent for Benjamin, who generously supplied what money he could spare, for her relief. This was a dangerous intercourse for the young man. His account of it clearly shows that her applications for assistance, proceeded from actual and extreme penury on her part, and honorably acquits her of any artful design of entrapping him. But this freedom from all craft and subtlety toward him, only increased his danger; and in his sympathy for a person of her attractive qualities and infirm virtue, it was but too natural that he should soon feel other and less pure impulses mingling with his benevolence. The result is best related in his own words:—

"I grew fond," says he, "of her company; and be-

ing at that time under no religious restraint, and taking advantage of my importance to her, I attempted to take some liberties with her (another *erratum*), which she repulsed with a proper degree of resentment. She wrote to Ralph and acquainted him with my conduct. This occasioned a breach between us; and when he returned to London, he let me know he considered all the obligations he had been under to me, as annulled; from which I concluded I was never to expect his repaying the money I had lent him, or had advanced for him. This, however, was of little consequence, as he was totally unable; and by the loss of his *friendship*, I found myself relieved from a heavy burden."

This result was unquestionably fortunate for Benjamin, for the sake of his morals, not less than his pocket; and though his conduct, in one particular, was culpable, yet his ingenuous confession of his fault, his honest self-condemnation, and his just reference to fixed religious principle, as the truest and surest restraint upon the passions, make some amends for his transgression; while his generous readiness to relieve distress, is worthy of imitation, as well as praise.

The conduct of Ralph, however, presents no compensating traits, and was in good keeping with the spurious pride he had manifested, in reference to the employment of a schoolmaster. In changing his name, he had committed a fraud, not only upon the community in which he was residing, but also, according to his own estimate of his occupation there, upon the friend whose name he pilfered; and in pretending to consider his actual debt, to say nothing of gratitude, to Benjamin, as cancelled, when he broke friendship with him, he was only adding more than common meanness, to more than common dishonesty. True self-respect or dignity of sentiment, if he had possessed a particle of either,

would have rendered him more than ordinarily anxious to relieve himself from the sense of obligation, under such circumstances, not by repudiating a debt incurred as that was, but by making his most strenuous exertions to pay it, at the earliest possible day, to the very last farthing. But this unprincipled man will trouble us, as he troubled his abused friend, no further.

While Benjamin was working in Palmer's printing-office, he was employed in setting the types for a new edition of Wollaston's "*Religion of Nature;*" and as he deemed some of the reasonings in that work unsound, he controverted them, in a metaphysical tract, which he then wrote, entitled "*A Dissertation of Liberty and Necessity—Pleasure and Pain,*" a few copies of which he printed. That performance is not now extant; but from the terms in which Franklin himself mentions it, the inference is, that it must have given a very free expression of the religious unbelief, which at that period possessed his mind. Speaking of it, at a long subsequent period, when he cherished very different sentiments, he says: "It occasioned my being more considered by Mr. Palmer, as a young man of some ingenuity, though he seriously expostulated with me, upon the principles of my pamphlet, which to him appeared abominable. My printing this pamphlet was another *erratum.*"

This dissertation, however objectionable on account of its opinions—and his own censure of it is likely to have been just—contributed, nevertheless, to extend his circle of acquaintance; and the enlarged opportunity thus obtained for observing life and character, served to give a wider variety to his subjects of thought and fresh impulse to his mental activity. The extension of his social intercourse, on this occasion, took place through the agency of a man named Lyons, a surgeon by pro-

fession, who had published a treatise on "*The Infallibility of Human Judgment.*" Lyons having accidentally met with young Franklin's pamphlet, read it, and finding in it, doubtless, some opinions harmonizing with his own, and probably also some indications of an original way of thinking, he sought out the author, became exceedingly fond of his conversation, courted his society, and introduced him to a club which he was himself in the habit of frequenting.

The most noted person with whom Benjamin became acquainted at that club, was Mandeville, author of "*The Fable of the Bees*"—a work which enjoyed for a time considerable celebrity, but has latterly been little read. It inculcates the pernicious doctrine that private vices are public benefits, inasmuch as they give a wider range to the wants of men, and by thus multiplying the employments of the community, augment the demand and the compensation for labor—a doctrine, which the great Apostle to the Gentiles could not have sanctioned, as it is only another way of saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come."

Mandeville himself is described as being a man of very entertaining conversation, of a facetious turn, and "the soul" of the club that gathered around him. For that very reason, however, he was only the more dangerous a companion for those whose principles were not firmly settled. Lyons also introduced Benjamin to one Dr. Pemberton, who promised him an opportunity to see the celebrated Sir Isaac Newton, then approaching the close of his long and illustrious career. But that opportunity, though eagerly coveted, never came. The great philosopher was then, 1725, in his 84th year, and died on the 20th of March, 1726, almost as much distinguished beyond the common lot, in years as in fame.

Another incident not unworthy of notice, in the ex-

Franklin's visit to an Alehouse Club.

perience of a journeyman printer, a youth of nineteen, and a stranger from a land beyond the ocean, was his becoming acquainted with Sir Hans Sloane, with the occasion of it. Among some rarities which Benjamin had taken with him from Philadelphia, was a purse made of *asbestos*, or, as it is sometimes called, *amianthus;* a kind of stone, which is not only inconsumable by fire, but so fibrous as to be separable into threads flexible enough to be compactly and smoothly woven; and the webs made of it, when soiled by use, are cleaned by putting them into the fire, instead of a wash-tub.

Benjamin, whose pistoles, with his friend Ralph's assistance, had run very low, having learned something of the character and tastes of Sir Hans, who was very much of a virtuoso, a lover and collector of rare and curious things, addressed him a note, dated June 2d, 1725, in which he says: "Having lately been in the northern parts of America, I have brought thence a purse made of the *asbestos*, a piece of the stone, and a piece of wood the pithy part of which is of the same nature, and is called by the inhabitants there, *salamander-cotton*. As you are noted to be a lover of curiosities, I have informed you of these; and if you have any inclination to purchase or see them, let me know your pleasure by a line for me at the Golden Fan, Little Britain, and I will wait upon you with them." On receiving the note, Sir Hans, instead of writing, called in person upon the young tradesman, whom he politely invited to his house in Bloomsbury square, showed him his extensive collections of things rare and curious, and finally purchased the inconsumable purse, paying for it handsomely, says Franklin, though he does not name the sum.

CHAPTER X.

BETTER HABITS IMPROVE HIS OWN CONDITION AND BENEFIT OTHERS.

As soon as Benjamin had got rid of Ralph, he began to think of laying up some of his earnings; and with a view to more productive employment also, he went from Palmer's to Watts's printing-house, a larger one near Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he continued as long as he remained in London. Upon entering this office he first worked at the press, for the sake of the bodily exercise it gives, which he felt the want of, and to which he had been accustomed in America, where press-work and case-work were in those days almost universally, and are even now to a considerable extent, performed by the same hands.

Here he became an efficient and valuable promoter of temperance. He was a *teetotaller* himself, drinking only water; while the fifty other hands in the office were excessive drinkers of beer. For the sake of expediting his labor, or for convenience, he would now-and-then carry, up or down stairs, a large form of types in each hand, while others carried but one such form, with both hands. It was indeed unquestionable evidence of the power of his arms; and his fellow-workmen wondered to see the strength of the "Water-American," as they called him, so much exceed their own, which had, as

they fancied, been nourished and increased by *strong* beer. So frequent were the calls for beer at that one establishment, that a boy, called the *Ale-House Boy*, was kept for no other purpose but to go and come with drink.

The heavy drain upon the wages of the beer-drinkers, made by this practice, may be seen from the fact that Benjamin's companion in working the press, drank six pints a day regularly; that is to say, a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast, a pint between that meal and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint about 6 o'clock, P. M., and a pint at the close of the day's work. And all this he did, in the opinion that it was necessary to give him strength; an opinion still very common, in which, however, is involved the serious error of mistaking the transient effect of mere stimulation, for the permanent increase of muscular power.

"I thought the custom detestable," says Franklin, "and I endeavored to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer, could only be in proportion to the grain, or flour, of the barley, dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a penny-worth of bread; and therefore, if he would eat that, with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He *drank on*, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages, every Saturday night, for that vile liquor; an expense I was free from." No wonder that these mistaken hard-working men always, as he says, "kept themselves under."

Much to his own credit, as well as to the benefit of the whole set of hands at Watts's large printing-house, Benjamin exerted himself to reform some of their habits. His efforts were obstructed for a while, by his resisting the payment of a certain fee, alleged to be cus-

tomary, but which he thought unfairly demanded. When he first went to this establishment, he began working, as we have seen, at press-work, and then paid his *bien-venu*, as it was called; that is, his *welcome* fee. After a few weeks, however, Mr. Watts, needing more help at case-work, requested Benjamin to transfer himself to the *composing-room*. On doing so, the compositors demanded of him another *bien-venu*. This he refused, and Mr. Watts also forbade his paying it.

For this refusal, however, the compositors, of course, excommunicated him from all the privileges of their fellowship; and while he thus lay under interdict, he was subjected to all manner of annoyance by vexatious tricks and practical jokes. His *sorts* of type were mixed in his cases; his *matter* was broken and transposed, as it stood on the *galleys;* or was thrown into *pi*, whenever he was for a moment absent. No remedy could be had, because all these naughty things were done by "the ghost of the *chapel*" (as the rooms of a printing-office are termed by the craft), which always haunt every one, whose entrance is not according to the chapel canons, and nobody can be held responsible for what is done by a ghost.

In short, there was no protection for the refractory compositor, as long as he continued recusant; and after persisting for two or three weeks in recusancy, he saw that the best thing he could do, was to pay the welcome money; having, in the exercise of his good sense, come to the conclusion, that it is always foolish to be voluntarily on "ill terms with those you are to live with continually."

Being once placed on good terms and a fair footing with the whole body of his fellow-workmen, his shrewdness, good temper, ingenuity, and obliging disposition, soon gave him, as usual, a leading influence with them,

Scene at the pay table on Saturday evening.

and enabled him to carry, against all opposition, several very sensible reforms in the laws of the *chapel*. His practice, with the results, which, daily and hourly, it placed directly before their eyes, and with especial emphasis on every weekly pay-day, induced numbers of his fellow-workmen to change their habits and follow his example. Leaving their "muddling breakfast of beer, bread, and cheese," they procured, with him, at a house near by, "a large porringer of hot water-gruel," not the meager drink prepared for invalids, but well thickened with crumbled bread, and savored and enriched with a sprinkle of pepper and "a bit of butter," all for a penny and a half, which was the price their pint of beer alone cost them. This was unquestionably "a more comfortable as well as a cheaper breakfast," than they had been accustomed to take, and it "kept their heads clearer."

The other workmen, who "continued *sotting it* with their beer all day," he found to be, pretty generally, either in doubtful credit, or with none at all, at the ale-house; and they became for the most part dependent on the water-drinker for money, or for his responsibility, to enable them to procure beer; their own cash being exhausted, or, as they termed it, "their *light* being out." By keeping a vigilant eye on the pay-table, when pay-time came round, every Saturday, he secured himself, in the main, against loss on the sums of beer-money, for which he had agreed to become responsible, and which, at times, as he states, amounted to near thirty shillings in a single week. His willingness to confer favors of this sort, his uniform cheerfulness of spirit, his good temper, playful humor, and ready wit, with a turn for occasional jocular satire, or being what was called among them a good *riggist*, gave him a high rank among his associates of the printing-office; while, at the same time,

his steady attendance at the office, without regard to St. Monday, or other holyday excuses for absence and idleness, secured the countenance and favor of his employer; and being a remarkably rapid compositor, such work as required despatch as well as accuracy, and therefore brought the highest pay, was put into his hands. "So I went on," says he, "very agreeably."

How soon the conduct and character of this young man, his ways of life, his usefulness to others not less than to himself, and his value as a man, began to improve — to rise on the scale of moral and social worth — when he had become relieved from the burden of Ralph, and had escaped from the misguiding and depraving influences of his companionship! Such benefits were no doubt cheaply purchased by the loss of the mere money paid on his account. In this connection it may also be mentioned that next door to his lodgings dwelt a man named Wilcox, a bookseller, who had a very large collection of second-hand books. He seems to have been a well-disposed and obliging man, and with him, for a trifling compensation, Benjamin made an arrangement, by which he was allowed to take, read, and return, any books in the collection; and of this privilege, to him a precious one, he availed himself as fully as his regular employment would permit.

About this time, however, Benjamin left his quarters in Little Britain, for others in Duke street, much nearer to his present place of daily labor. His new room was a back chamber, in the fourth story of a warehouse belonging to his new hostess, in which were deposited various wares of Italian manufacture, in which she was a dealer.

This lady was a widow, and had a daughter living with her. She also kept a maid-servant to do her housework, and a hired man to wait upon customers, in the

ware-room, during the business hours of the day, but at night he slept elsewhere. Upon obtaining from the people with whom Benjamin had been boarding in Little Britain, an account of his character and habits, she consented to receive him at the same price he had been paying, at the house he was about leaving, and that was three shillings and sixpence a week; saying that she accepted such small pay, for the sake of the increased security, which she felt would follow from having such a lodger in the house.

This worthy and kind-hearted widow, now far advanced in years, was the daughter of a Protestant clergyman of the Church of England as by law established, and her father had reared and educated her in his own faith. But having married a gentleman of the Roman Catholic persuasion, he had converted her to his own creed and church, in which she still remained steadfast; and she appeared, according to Franklin's estimate of her, to cherish her husband's memory with a deep and sincere feeling of affectionate respect.

She had, moreover, as it is stated, been long and intimately conversant with many families of high rank, some of which were distinguished for character and public services, as well as birth; and concerning them she possessed, it is related, a rich and varied store of anecdotes, reaching back as far, in many instances, as the days of Charles II.; thus covering, with interesting recollections, a period of more than forty years. This excellent and respectable woman had suffered long and much from gout in her knees, which had now become so weak that she was rarely able to leave her room, or, at times, even her chair. Company, therefore, especially cheerful and quiet company, was very acceptable to her; and "hers was so highly amusing to me," says Franklin, "that I was sure to spend an evening with

her, whenever she desired it." Their supper, on these pleasant occasions, consisted of "half an anchovy for each, on a very little slice of bread and butter, and half a pint of ale for both; but the entertainment was in her conversation."

Benjamin was now so regular in his hours, gave so little trouble, and was in all respects so quiet and pleasant a boarder, that his hostess became solicitous to retain him; and when he mentioned that he had heard of lodgings still nearer to his place of labor, to be had for only two shillings a week, and that such a saving, in his circumstances, was important to him, she at once told him not to think of going, for she would thenceforward keep him for eighteen pence per week: and he continued with her, at that price, for the rest of his stay in London.

The same house held another lodger, a female, whose history and way of life were not a little singular. She was a maiden lady of three-score and ten years, and she occupied a room in the garret, living in almost utter seclusion from society. She was a Roman Catholic, and when very young had been placed in a convent on the continent, with the design of making her a nun. The situation of the establishment, as it appears, however, proving unfavorable to her health, she left it and came back to England. But in England there were no nunneries, nor convents of any kind; and she was unable, therefore, to pursue the way of life to which she had vowed herself, according to the literal strictness of her vow and the rigor of conventual rule; and so she was doing the best she could, by living the life of a nun, with as much exactness as circumstances would allow, in the garret of the warehouse, in which Benjamin now had his lodgings.

There had this aged and simple-minded woman dwelt,

and thus had she lived, for a long series of years, free of rent-charge, through the kindness of many successive occupants of the building, all of whom had been professors of the same faith with herself, and who had all deemed it a blessing to have this pious and holy hermitess under their roof. At an early day, long prior to the time now spoken of, she had conveyed the whole of her estate, which seems to have been considerable, to trustees, in trust for charitable uses, reserving only twelve pounds a year, from its proceeds, for her own support; and even of this small sum, she annually dispensed a part in alms, living herself on water-gruel alone, and that too of the most meager kind, using no fire except to make her gruel.

A priest visited her daily, to receive her confession; and being asked one day by the landlady, how she, in her long-practised abstinence, could need such frequent confession, the ancient nun replied — "Oh! it is impossible to avoid vain thoughts."

When it is considered that the "thoughts," which a woman of so harmless and abstemious a life, and of such venerable age, had been so long accustomed to deem "vain," and yet found it "*impossible to avoid,*" were doubtless the suggestions of her natural and long-repressed affections, avenging themselves upon her, for her mistaken faith and practice, then the foregoing reply, brief and simple as it is, comes to the mind with a melancholy significance. Her "way of life had fallen into the sear and yellow leaf," but yet, at seventy years as at twenty, she was still sitting alone in a secluded chamber —

> "While that which should accompany old age,
> As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends," —

the blessing and glory of the hoary head, and what the aged heart craves and yearns for, she "could not look

to have." There can not easily be found a sadder spectacle.

Benjamin once obtained permission to visit her. "She was," says he, "cheerful and polite, and conversed pleasantly. The room was clean, but had no other furniture than a mattress, a table with a crucifix and a book, a stool which she gave me to sit on, and a picture over the chimney, of St. Veronica, displaying her handkerchief with the miraculous figure of Christ's bleeding face on it, which she explained to me with great seriousness. She looked pale, but was never sick; and I give it as another instance on how small an income life and health may be supported."

A course of life which makes so trifling a demand upon either the corporeal, or mental powers, as hers did, does certainly need but little sustenance; for the legitimate requirement of nature for food, is proportioned to the daily expenditure of strength, by the employment of mind, or body, or both.

Among the acquaintances which Benjamin formed, while working for Watts, was "an ingenious young man" by the name of Wygate, who, "having wealthy relatives, had been better educated than most printers; was a tolerable Latinist, spoke French, and loved reading." He and a friend of his were taught by Benjamin to swim, on going but twice into the Thames; after which they shortly made themselves good swimmers. They introduced their teacher to some of their acquaintances just come to London, with whom the three made a party to go by water by Chelsea, to see the college and the curiosities there.

Wygate had said so much to his friends, of Benjamin's remarkable expertness in the water, that they had a strong desire to see something of it; and on their return, at the request of the company, he stripped, and

plunging into the river, swam the distance from near Chelsea to Blackfriars, performing on the way "many feats of activity both *upon* and *under* the water, which surprised and pleased those to whom they were novelties." He had, "from a child," as he relates, "been delighted with this exercise; had studied and practised Thevenot's motions and positions, and added some of his own, aiming at the graceful and easy, as well as the useful;" all of which he performed, on the occasion mentioned, deriving much gratification from the admiration he excited.

Wygate, who had become filled with a strong desire to make himself a master of the art, growing more and more warmly attached to Benjamin on that account, as well as from the similarity of their studies and tastes in other respects, at length proposed that they two should travel together all over Europe, paying their way with what they could earn at different towns, by working at their trade. This would have been literally restoring the original usage of journeymen tradesmen, with whom it was common to travel, for the purpose of accomplishing themselves more thoroughly in their craft. The proposal made a strong impression upon Benjamin's mind, and he was at first inclined to adopt it. Upon talking of it, however, with the excellent Mr. Denham, with whom Benjamin, much to the credit of his good sense and right feeling, frequently spent a portion of his leisure, that judicious and faithful friend dissuaded him from the project, and wisely urged him to think only of going back to Philadelphia with him, as he now intended soon to do.

Mr. Denham, it has been already intimated, was a member of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers; and Franklin gives, in this connection, a specimen of his practice so honorable to his principles, but

so comparatively rare, probably, in those days, as well as at the present time, though still so worthy of imitation, that the account is too interesting and valuable both as an anecdote and an example, to be omitted.

"I must," says Franklin, "record one trait of this good man's character. He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failed, in debt to a number of people, compounded, and went to America. There, by close application to business as a merchant, he acquired a plentiful fortune in a few years. Returning to England in the ship with me, he invited his old creditors to an entertainment, at which he thanked them for the easy composition they had favored him with, and, when they expected nothing but the treat, every man, at the first remove, found under his plate an order on a banker, for *the full amount* of the unpaid remainder, with interest."

If all men in trade were thus truly honest and just, there would be less complaint of the hardness of creditors, and little need of bankrupt-acts.

Mr. Denham, having transacted the business which had brought him to England, now informed Benjamin that he should soon sail for Philadelphia, with a large stock of merchandise, with which he intended to establish himself in that city as a merchant. He had, moreover, formed a most favorable estimate of his young friend's capacity as well as the native qualities of his disposition; and taking a sincere interest in his welfare, for which he could not help feeling a lively concern, if left, without any experienced and faithful adviser, to encounter alone the hazards and perils of London, he proposed to Benjamin to take him as a clerk. The intelligent and worthy merchant told him that he could soon teach him the manner of keeping a merchant's accounts; that in doing this, and in copying business letters, in attending upon customers for the sale of goods,

and in the other daily-recurring details of mercantile affairs, he could speedily make himself acquainted with the current prices of produce, merchandise, and other kinds of property, together with the general course and management of trade; that when he should have become sufficiently familiar with these matters, he would send him out to the West Indies, with a cargo of provisions and bread-stuffs, and procure profitable commissions for him, from other merchants; and if he should give his best energies to the business, and acquit himself according to his capacity, which only needed some practical development to make him a good merchant, he would "establish him handsomely."

This plan pleased Benjamin. He was becoming weary of London; his recollections of Philadelphia were reviving many pleasing images in his mind, with a vividness and force, which were already urging him to return thither; and he promptly agreed to the proposal. For his services as clerk he was to receive a yearly stipend of fifty pounds, in Pennsylvania currency.. This was less than he was then earning as a journeyman-printer; but he looked mainly at the results of the plan, and the prospects were very inviting.

"I now," says he, "took leave of printing, as I thought, forever; and was daily employed in my new business, going about with Mr. Denham among the tradesmen, to purchase various articles and see them packed, delivering messages, and calling upon workmen to despatch." These things being done, and the packages being all duly put on ship-board, he still had a few days of leisure before sailing.

While thus waiting to take his departure, Benjamin was surprised by a message from Sir William Wyndham, whom he had never seen and knew only by reputation, but who was one of the most accomplished gentle-

men, as well as one of the most distinguished statesmen, of that period, and who wished to see him. Upon waiting on him, Benjamin found that Sir William, having heard of his feats in swimming, and of his skill in teaching others to swim, and having two sons about to set forth upon their travels, wished to engage him to make them good swimmers before they went, and would pay liberally for such a service.

The young men, however, had not yet come to town, and Benjamin's remaining time in London, was now too contingent to allow him to undertake the proposed task. The application, nevertheless, induced him to think that, if he could have stayed and opened a swimming-school, it would have paid well; and that he should probably have remained and tried the experiment, if the application had been made before he became engaged with Mr. Denham.

In his own narrative of his life, Franklin closes the account of his residence in London, at this period, with the following paragraph, which will also form an appropriate close to this chapter:—

"Thus had I passed about eighteen months in London. Most part of the time I worked hard at my business, and spent but little upon myself except in seeing plays, and in books. My friend Ralph had kept me poor. He owed me about twenty-seven pounds, which I was now never likely to receive: a great sum out of my small earnings. I loved him, notwithstanding, for he had many amiable qualities. I had improved my knowledge, however, though I had by no means improved my fortune; but I had made some very ingenious acquaintances, whose conversation was of great advantage to me; and I had read considerably."

CHAPTER XI.

LEAVES ENGLAND — VOYAGE HOME — NEW CONNECTIONS.

On Thursday, the 21st of July, 1726, in the afternoon, Benjamin and his friend Denham went on board the good ship *Berkshire*, Henry Clark, master, bound for Philadelphia. As appears, however, by the journal, which Benjamin kept of this voyage, it was many days longer before they were able to leave the English waters and get fairly out to sea. Some of the incidents which occurred during this delay on the coast of England, and on the homeward passage, though not incorporated in Franklin's own biographical narrative, are, nevertheless, by no means without interest; and as they not only belong to his life as truly as if they had occurred at a fixed residence on land, but served, also, to enlarge his experience and his stock of ideas, some of the more entertaining and instructive among them are here briefly related.

They lingered in the Thames two days, and did not pass the Downs and enter the straits of Dover till the 24th of July. As they sailed along that narrow sea, at an easy rate, before a fresh breeze and under a clear blue sky, Benjamin, sitting on the quarter-deck of the *Berkshire* and noting what he saw, in his diary, was favored with one of the fairest and most exhilarating

scenes the eye can rest on. A large number of ships, with all their canvass spread and trimmed to every variety of course, were moving before him in all directions over the gleaming waters; the coast of France was looming far in the distance, to the left; while nearer, on the right, and in distinct view, were seen the town of Dover with the massive towers and battlements of its huge old castle looking down upon it in protecting strength, and the chalky cliffs and green hills of the English shore — all in seeming motion and receding in a sort of countermarch, as he went by.

The next morning, however, the wind failed, and a short calm was followed by very variable weather, till the 27th, when so heavy a gale came from the west, right in their teeth, that they ran for a harbor; and coming to anchor at Spithead, off Portsmouth, Benjamin took the opportunity to visit that ancient town, one of the principal naval stations of England, and famous for its vast ship-yards. The entrance to Portsmouth is stated to be so narrow, with such bold shores, that the forts which guard it, one on each side, are but a stone's throw apart; while the haven within has ample space to moor the whole British navy. He found the place strongly fortified, surrounded by a high wall, with a spacious moat crossed by two draw-bridges fronting, respectively, the two gates of the town, which depended, then as now, for the support of its population, mainly on its ship-yards and the trade connected with them.

One of the most remarkable objects pointed out to Benjamin, during his brief visit to Portsmouth, was a dungeon, called "Johnny Gibson's Hole," under the town-wall near one of the gates, where John Gibson, governor of the place in Queen Anne's reign, and a heartless tyrant, made it a practice to shut in and starve the soldiers of the garrison, for the most trifling irregulari-

ties. On this cruel and needless severity, Benjamin makes a comment which is here copied, not only for its pertinency and justness, but as an indication, also, of the range of his reading and his habits of reflection, at that early period. Admitting the importance of good discipline, he adds the remark, that — "Alexander and Cæsar, those renowned generals, received more faithful service, and performed greater actions, by means of the love their soldiers bore them, than they could possibly have done, if, instead of being beloved and respected, they had been hated and feared, by those they commanded."

After all, however, the general condition of the rank and file of armies, has been, on the whole, but little relieved by such occasional examples of clemency and care on the part of a few great leaders; and the practice of "Johnny Gibson," there is but too much reason to believe, may, in its spirit and essence, be deemed more in accord with actual experience, or a truer specimen of those fruits, which, among nations particularly covetous of martial fame, war, with its manifold concomitants — its costly establishments — the life of its camps and garrisons, and the despotic power and summary procedure by which alone can that life be regulated — has usually yielded to the common soldiery and the mass of the people. Its pomps and splendors — its gains and glories — have been mostly for the great ones — for the high-born, privileged, or lucky *few;* while its deadliest perils and most exhausting labors — its foot-blistering marches and weary night-watches — the pestilence of its camps and the bloody havoc of its battle-fields — its nakedness and famine — its dungeons and prison-ships — its desolated hearths, its peeled and scattered families, its heavy taxes, hard toil, maimed limbs, vagrant beggary, and its thousand nameless woes,

have been the *harvest* of the humble, unprivileged, unfriended *many*.

Leaving Portsmouth on the 28th of July and proceeding along the straits, which separate the Isle of Wight from the shore of England, they visited Cowes, Newport, and Yarmouth, the three principal towns of the Isle, and at one or other of which the *Berkshire* was detained by head winds for nearly a fortnight. Though becoming impatient to be once more in Philadelphia, this delay was by no means lost time to Benjamin; for he took the opportunity to gratify his curiosity by seeing, as fully as circumstances allowed, what that side of the island contained.

Cowes, a port often visited now-a-days by the merchant-vessels of the United States, is built on both sides of a small estuary, which sends a narrow inlet about four miles inland, along a pleasant vale at the head of which stands Newport, the residence of the governor of the island, and an inviting little town, embellished and refreshed by an unusual abundance of fine trees and shrubbery. But Newport is represented as being chiefly remarkable for its trade in oysters, reputed to be superior to any others found on the British coasts. It appears, however, that these oysters are not natives of the place but are procured elsewhere, and, to fatten and prepare them for market, they are planted in regular beds in the Newport waters, which contain, doubtless, some ingredient particularly acceptable to the oysters for food, and imparting to them their fine relish. A case bearing a strong analogy to this, is that of the famous canvass-back ducks, which frequent the lower reaches of the Susquehannah river and the head-waters of the Chesapeake bay, and derive their peculiarly fine and delicate flavor from the wild

celery, which abounds in their favorite haunts, and on which they chiefly feed.

But Benjamin's most interesting excursion, during his stay on this island, was his visit to the village and castle of Carisbrook, about a mile back of Newport. Except the ruins of a fine old Gothic church, the mother-church of the whole isle, and in the palmy days of papal supremacy, connected with a priory, the village contained little to attract a tourist; and passing the small brook, which skirts it and gives name to the whole locality, he made his way, with a boy for his guide, up a steep hill, on the sides and summit of which stood the dilapidated walls and towers of Carisbrook castle, once an extensive and strong fortress, but in 1726 little better than a mass of ivy-mantled ruins.

The outer wall and fosse of the castle encircled the hill so near its base as to enclose a very large area, in the lower portion of which and contiguous to the wall, had been erected those parts of the vast structure designed for household and other ordinary civic uses; while high above, on the crest of the commanding height, stood the massive and round towers of the keep, the strongest and most ancient part of the fortress, the ascent to which was by a steep and narrow stair-way of a hundred stone steps.

Within this citadel was the famous well, said to have been, when dug, the deepest in the world. To assist him in forming some judgment of its depth, Benjamin dropped a stone into it, and though great quantities of rubbish had accumulated above its original bottom, yet he found it to be about fifteen seconds before the stone was heard to strike. A more accurate estimate of its depth, however, could be formed, probably, by comparing it with the well then actually in use, in the lower part of the castle. That well was known to be thirty fathoms deep;

and as the water in both the wells was doubtless supplied from the same source and at the same level, the height of the upper well's mouth above that of the lower one, being added to the thirty fathoms mentioned, would give the true original depth of the upper well, and make it about three hundred feet. From this lower well the people in and about the castle obtained their daily supplies of water, which they raised by means of a very large wheel and axle with a barrel for a bucket. "It makes," says the journal, "a great sound, if you speak in it, and it echoed the flute which we played over it, very sweetly."

The old man, who acted as nominal keeper of the place, but whose chief occupation was selling cake and beer at the castle-gate, told Benjamin that the castle was originally founded in the year 523, by one Whitgert, a Saxon chief, who had conquered the island, and from whom it bore, for many ages, the name of Whitgertsburg. Indeed, in its present name there is a trace of its Saxon conqueror.

This castle was extensively repaired, strengthened, and embellished by Queen Elizabeth, in 1598; in testimony whereof, Benjamin found on the walls, in several places, the following brief inscription:—"1598, E. R. 40:"—meaning, doubtless, that in the year 1598, the 40th of her reign, Elizabeth, Regina (queen), caused these repairs to be made.

Since the middle of the 17th century, Carisbrook castle has been remembered in history, chiefly from its connection with the fortunes of Charles I., king of England. In the latter part of 1647, that misguided monarch, in a sudden but characteristic freak of mind, filled out the measure of his wayward career, by voluntarily placing himself in the custody of Colonel Hammond, a generous and humane man, but belonging, as was well

known, to the party led by Charles's most powerful antagonist, Oliver Cromwell, the ablest of that age; in which custody, kindly treated, but strictly guarded, the unthroned king remained till about the end of 1648, when he was removed, for a brief space, first to Hurst-castle in Hampshire, and thence to London, to trial, sentence, a scaffold, and the axe, in January, 1649, as a traitor to his country.

The castle-towers, on the crest of the hill, afforded a wide and beautiful prospect, including most of the island, which is about sixty miles in circuit, and is represented as being occupied by a sound and able-bodied population, with its soil even then well cultivated, and producing, says Benjamin's journal, "plenty of wheat and other provisions, and wool as fine as Cotswold."

The wool-growers of the present day, who clip their fleeces from the purest merinos and saxonies, may smile to see the wool of Cotswold offered as a standard. That standard has doubtless risen since 1726, among the farmers of the Isle of Wight, as well as elsewhere; and the same region has witnessed other changes of yet graver moment; for while the once massive walls of Carisbrook castle have become heaps of rubbish, testifying that the age of lawless power and rapine they originally betokened, has passed away, the fields of the Isle of Wight have been improving, with the increasing stability of private rights and social order, till they now constitute one of the most productive and beautiful districts in the whole realm of England.

Before leaving the island, the Berkshire touched at Yarmouth. The most striking object Benjamin noticed at this place, was a finely-executed marble statue, in armor, on the tomb of Sir Robert Holmes, a former governor of the island. This statue was said to have been executed in Italy for Louis XIV. of France, and

intended for one of the ornaments of his magnificent palace at Versailles; but the vessel, which was taking it to France, being wrecked on the island in the time of Sir Robert, he got possession of the statue and directed that after his death it should be placed on his own tomb.

At length, on the 9th of August, the wind came fair, and taking leave of England, mainland and island, the *Berkshire* stood away for America. The voyage was not marked by any events of magnitude; but a few of its incidents, having something of instruction or entertainment, are here noticed.

On the 21st of August, in the afternoon, when about six hundred miles from land, a small bird, blown off to sea during some recent thick weather, lighted, or rather fell on deck; but was too much exhausted even to take nourishment, and died in a few hours, though tenderly treated. The occurrence, not without interest in itself, is remarkable chiefly for the great distance from land when it happened.

An entry of more value for the information it conveys to the general reader, is made in the journal under date of September 2d, relative to the dolphin. It is not commonly known among landsmen that this fish is eaten; but two dolphins being caught in the morning of the day named, they were fried for dinner, and "tasted tolerably well." Among mere landsmen, moreover, the prevalent notion of the appearance and character of this fish, is probably that which has been received from the poets and artists, who have given it a form wholly unlike its real one, and who have a fanciful tradition that, in the dying moments of the dolphin, a succession of quick-shifting brilliant colors play over its body as life is ebbing away.

These notions are mere fancies, the dolphin being

"as beautiful and well-shaped a fish as any that swims;" making "a glorious appearance *in the water*," the body being "of a bright green mixed with a silver tint, and the tail of a shining golden yellow." On being taken out of the water, however, these splendid dyes all vanish together, giving place to a uniform pale gray, the usual hue of death. One of the most successful baits for the dolphin is a candle with a feather fixed in each side, to imitate the appearance of its frequent food, the flying fish; and three large dolphins thus caught one day, made a sufficient dinner for the whole ship's company, twenty-one in number.

On Wednesday, the 14th of September, in the afternoon, occurred one of the most sublime and awe-giving spectacles the material universe can present to human eyes — an eclipse of the sun nearly total, full ten twelfths of its disk being covered by the intervening moon.

With the wind almost unvaryingly ahead, the consequent slow progress, and an ill-assorted dull company, the passage was now becoming exceedingly wearisome; and the supply of bread was getting so low that on the 20th of September, they were all put upon a specific allowance of two and a half biscuits a day. They had run so far south, too, that the weather was uncomfortably hot; and on the day after the allowance was ordered, the ship idly rocking in the calm and the heat being very oppressive, Benjamin was about to refresh both his body and his spirits by a cooling bath in the sea, when a shark, "that mortal enemy to swimmers," was fortunately discovered in season to prevent what would, otherwise, have proved probably his last bath.

The habits of the shark are interesting. This one is represented as "moving round the ship at some distance, in a slow majestic manner," waited on by his usual retinue of little pilot-fishes, the largest of them

being less than the smaller mackerel, and the smallest, not much larger than minnows. Of "these diminutive pilots two kept just before the shark's nose," seeming really to control his movements; while the rest of the train swam about him, without any special duty to perform, unless it was, according to the common belief of sailors, to act as his purveyors of food; receiving from him, in return for such service, protection from one of their most destructive enemies, the swift and voracious dolphin. A strong well-baited hook was thrown out for the sea-robber; but he had, probably, dulled the fierce edge of his formidable appetite, with some recent victim, and declined the invitation to a lunch so soon after.

Two days afterward they spoke a ship from Dublin, bound for New York, carrying out about fifty emigrants to their Land of Promise. The two vessels approached each other within easy hail, and all on board of each presented themselves, to enjoy a look at other human faces thus casually encountered in the midst of the lonely waste of waters. The feeling that springs from mere identity of race — the sympathy of a common nature — is probably felt nowhere so strongly as out on the wide ocean, under precisely the circumstances here mentioned; and the exhilarating influence of such a meeting is so well described in the journal before us, that we transcribe the passage: it will recall to many a beautiful parallel passage in Irving's "Sketch Book:" —

"There was really," says the journal, "something strangely cheering to the spirits, in the meeting of a ship at sea, containing a society of creatures of the same species and in the same circumstances with ourselves, after we had been long separated from the rest of mankind. My heart fluttered in my breast with joy, when I saw so many human countenances, and I could scarce refrain from that kind of laughter which proceeds from

inward pleasure. When we have been for a considerable time tossing on the vast waters, far from the sight of land or ships, or any mortal creature but ourselves, except a few fish and sea-birds, the whole world, for aught we know, may be under a second deluge, and we, like Noah and his companions in the Ark, the only surviving remnant of the human race."

For the following day or two the wind became more favorable, and sent them along at a rate, which so raised their spirits that they began to talk of Philadelphia and think of the friends they should soon meet; when, early in the morning of September 26th, they suddenly found themselves, without any previous warning, in the very vortex of a violent tornado, which wheeled in so short a curve, that the forward sails were filled on one side, and the sails aft on the other; and the rain and the gale were both so violent that "the sea looked like a dish of cream." Luckily, however, the tornado soon passed off on its whirling track, and was succeeded, to the joy of all, by a fresh northeaster, which sped the Berkshire cheerily on her course.

In a day or two, however, the wind veered again to the west and north of west, from which quarter it had, indeed, come during most of their run thus far. But though they had thus been compelled, in order to make any headway, to take a very southerly course, and were making their track a very long one, yet on the 28th they entered the gulf-stream, which was indicated by the sea-weed, which is spread over the Atlantic from near the American coast to the Azores, by that great oceanic river.

On fishing up and examining some of this weed, his curiosity was much excited by finding numerous specimens of a small shell-fish adhering to its branches. The smallest of them contained what seemed to the

naked eye merely a soft unorganized pulp; but the larger ones plainly manifested animal life, by opening and shutting their shells, and thrusting forth claws resembling the crab's, but not yet fully formed. On looking more closely among the branches, he discovered a very small crab, not so large as his finger-nail, detached from the weed. This naturally suggested the inference that the little shells still adhering to the weed, contained the embryos of other animals of the same species; and the better to test this inference, he put a branch, with many adhering shells upon it, into a cask of sea-water, intending to renew the water from time to time, and watch the result. The very next day he found in the cask another young crab, so small that it seemed just separated from its native branch. But the weed in the cask was now wilted, and the other embryos dead, so that his experiment was cut short.

The facts he had already observed, however, satisfied him that his inference was correct. He now recollected also, that during a recent calm, he had seen a crab swimming among the floating weeds, on which it was then supposed to be feeding; and other circumstances relating to this same species of shell-fish, now recurred to his mind and served to corroborate his views.

These circumstances are related as serving to present the mental habits and tendencies of the subject of our narrative, in an interesting light, and as exemplifying that spirit of observation which, as it became more developed by exercise, led him to those philosophical investigations for which he ultimately became so pre-eminently distinguished.

A day or two after the incidents just related, another interesting phenomenon occurred, in the heavens. This was an eclipse of the moon. According to the calculation of this eclipse for the meridian of London, it was

to commence at 5, A. M., of September 30th; but at the longitude of the Berkshire it began at about 11, P. M., of the 29th, and continued nearly three hours. At the moment of greatest obscuration, which was about half an hour after midnight, six digits, or one half of the moon's disk, was covered by the shadow of the earth.

On the morning of October 4th, a flying-fish was found dead on deck, where it had probably alighted from its flight to escape its most persecuting enemy, the dolphin. Its wings are described as being of a fin-like structure, and extending from a little back of the gills nearly to the tail. Its flight is straight-forward, commonly from six to ten feet above the water, and sometimes reaching forty or fifty yards, or as long as the wings continue wet enough to hold the air. When hard pressed by the dolphin, they rise, usually in little flocks of four or five, and sometimes more; but their swift pursuer, aware of their straight flight, holds right on, and is generally at the spot ready to seize them when they again touch the water.

On the evening of the same day the Berkshire's company were cheered by tokens of nearing land. These tokens had, in truth, begun to excite more than ordinary interest, for "the ship's crew was now brought to a short allowance of water." Happily, on the 7th of October, the wind, so long contrary, came fresh and strong from the northeast, sending the ship steadily on her course, full seven knots an hour; and holding at the same point for the two following days, they sped onward, amid multiplying signs that they were at length rapidly approaching the American coast, till, on Sunday, the 9th of October, a little past noon, a man on the look-out aloft, to the great joy of all in the ship, gave "the long-wished-for cry of LAND." Sixty full days had now

elapsed since Benjamin had taken his last look at the shores of England; and when, about an hour later, the coast of his native land became visible from the Berkshire's deck, it was for a time somewhat dimmed to the moist eyes with which he gazed upon it.

Captain Clark, however, being wholly unacquainted with the coast, and no pilot appearing, the Berkshire did not enter the Delaware till the next day; and the evening of still another day came round, before Benjamin actually set foot again in Philadelphia, when his journal is closed with a warm expression of gladness, and a hearty "thank God," on the safe completion of "so tedious and dangerous a voyage."

But far the most important subject that occupied Benjamin's mind, on this long passage, remains to be noticed in closing this chapter. That subject was the regulation of his future career — the methodizing of his life upon some comprehensive system, including not merely the occupation by which he was to gain his livelihood, but other fixed and definite objects, for the attainment of which his faculties should be exerted, so that neither ability nor opportunity should be wasted in indecision, or in unproductive because aimless effort.

To aid him in accomplishing a purpose of such grave concern, he availed himself of his leisure at sea to digest such a plan and reduce it to writing. In his own account of his life, long years after, he refers to that plan as making part of his journal; but it is not there. It was probably lost, with a great many other of his papers, during his long-protracted absence from home and country in the public service; so that no judgment can now be formed of it, except by way of inference from other portions of his writings on similar topics, and from the actual course of his life. Such an inference is the more to be relied on in this case, for an idea of the

general tenor of the plan in question, for the reason that, on adverting to it, as stated, he speaks of it with a just satisfaction, as being the more worthy of mention because, though formed at so early an age, he had, nevertheless, "pretty faithfully adhered to it, quite through to old age."

CHAPTER XII.

CHANGES IN PHILADELPHIA — DEATH OF MR. DENHAM SENDS BENJAMIN TO HIS TRADE AGAIN.

On returning to Philadelphia, and looking about among his former acquaintances to reconnect the social ties which had been temporarily severed, Benjamin found that an absence of less than even two years had made room for various changes. During that absence, Sir William Keith, the governor of the province when Benjamin sailed for England, had been removed, and Major Patrick Gordon appointed in his place. Keith, however, still remained in Philadelphia; and when he again saw in its streets the young man he had so unworthily deceived, manifested some consciousness of shame for his conduct, by shrinking away from any meeting with him.

But a change of more interest to Benjamin was the marriage of Miss Read. After the arrival of the letter, which, as heretofore mentioned, he wrote to her from London, her friends insisted that there was no probability he would ever return, and persuaded her to marry a man by the name of Rogers. He was a potter by trade, and is represented as being a very skilful workman. His prospects in business being considered highly promising, the friends of Miss Read urged the match, without making, as it seems, any sufficient inquiry into his personal character or private connections. The

marriage was an ill-judged and unhappy one; and from the circumstances attending it, as briefly alluded to by Franklin, it seems nearly certain that the young lady herself assented to it very reluctantly. It was soon followed by her refusal to live with her husband, or to be called by his name; and a report becoming prevalent that he actually had another wife living, she wholly renounced the connection. Rogers, in fact, proved to be unprincipled and worthless; and a year or two later, having involved himself deeply in debt, he absconded to the West Indies, where he died; thus relieving his nominal wife and her friends from all further embarrassment or annoyance through him.

Of the other persons already introduced into this narrative on account of their connection with Benjamin, the only one remaining to be noticed in this place, was the eccentric Keimer. His condition appeared to have become considerably improved. He had obtained possession of a much better house, in which he had opened a shop, with a good assortment of stationery; his printing-office was well supplied with types and other furniture; and he had several workmen in his employ, with apparently work enough to keep them busy.

Benjamin, however, had returned, it will be recollected, not as a journeyman printer, but as a merchant's clerk. His principal and friend, Mr. Denham, lost no time in opening his store of goods; and his clerk, giving diligent and earnest attention to his new business, soon made himself a correct and ready accountant, as well as an adroit and acceptable salesman. They both lived under the same roof, more like father and son than as master and servant; the excellent and intelligent Quaker merchant taking a sincere paternal interest in the welfare of his young friend and assistant, and the latter

cherishing for his patron and employer a truly filial respect and affection.

A letter of Benjamin's, dated on the 6th of January, O. S., 1727 — the 21st anniversary of his birthday — to Jane, his youngest sister, and the last child of her parents, presents such pleasing proof of the kindliness of his nature, and, besides the justness of its sentiments, gives so early an indication of the prevalent bent of his mind in favor of what is *useful* rather than *showy*, that the insertion of it here seems to be demanded, not merely for the reasons mentioned, but as being in a manner necessary to the just estimate of his character. To give the letter its full significance, moreover, it should be observed that Jane Franklin was now fast verging to the end of her 15th year, which was completed in the following March, and that her brother had recently heard of her intended marriage with Edward Mecom, which actually took place in the succeeding July, the fourth month of her 16th year. The interest of this letter is somewhat enhanced, also, by the fact that, excepting only the brief note to Sir Hans Sloane, relative to the *asbestos* purse, this is the earliest piece of writing from the same pen, now in print. The letter is as follows :—

"Dear Sister: I am highly pleased with the account Captain Freeman gives me of you. I always judged by your behavior when a child, that you would make a good and agreeable woman ; and you know you were ever my peculiar favorite. I have been thinking what would be a suitable present for me to make, and for you to receive, as I hear you are grown a celebrated beauty. I had almost determined on a tea-table ; but when I considered, that the character of a good housewife was far preferable to that of being only a pretty gentlewoman, I concluded to send you a *spinning-wheel*,

which I hope you will accept as a small token of my sincere love and affection.

"Sister, farewell; and remember that modesty, as it makes the most homely virgin amiable and charming, so the want of it infallibly renders the most perfect beauty disagreeable and odious. But when that brightest of female virtues shines, among other perfections of body and mind, in the same person, it makes the woman more lovely than an angel. Excuse this freedom, and use the same with me. I am, dear Jenny, your loving brother,

"B. FRANKLIN."

The new mercantile life on which Benjamin had entered, was now opening pleasantly before him, with cheering prospects of success in business, and under the happiest personal relations between himself and his patron, when, early in February, 1727, they were both prostrated by sickness. Benjamin's disease was pleurisy, and it came very near proving fatal. So severe did it become that he gave up any expectation of surviving it; and his intense sufferings under the violent inflammation which marks the disease, produced such exhaustion of spirit and weariness of life, that he felt, for the time, as he relates, some degree of disappointment and regret when he found himself recovering, and reflected that, sooner or later, he must again undergo a similar trial.

The disease which seized upon Mr. Denham is not named; but after a protracted struggle the worthy man died under it, in the course of the spring. His stock of merchandise passed into the hands of his executors; and Benjamin, with a small bequest from his friend as a memorial of goodwill, was again thrown upon his own resources. His brother-in-law, Captain Holmes, happening, fortunately, to be in Philadelphia, advised him

to betake himself again to his trade; and Keimer offered him a liberal yearly stipend, if he would take charge of his printing-office, so that he might himself devote his own attention wholly to his business as a stationer and bookseller. But, besides a strong repugnance to another engagement with Keimer, Benjamin felt very reluctant to abandon his new line of business. After making an unsuccessful effort, however, to find a permanent situation as a clerk in some mercantile house in Philadelphia, he accepted Keimer's offer.

On taking his place in the printing-office as foreman, he found there five persons — Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, a young Irishman called John, George Webb, and David Harry — of whom he has left a notice substantially as follows.

Meredith, a Pennsylvanian, bred a farmer, and now thirty years old, was an honest, sensible man, fond of reading, and too fond of strong drink. Potts, born and bred like Meredith, had just passed his minority, possessed uncommon parts and a lively wit, but was rather idle. The object of the former of these two was to become a pressman, and of the latter, a bookbinder; and for the sake of these objects they had engaged at unusually low wages, which were to be raised from time to time, as they should become more expert and useful. John, the only name by which the young Irishman is designated, bred to no regular business, was an emigrant whose services Keimer had purchased for a term of four years, and was to make him a good pressman. George Webb was a runaway student of Oxford university, in England, whose services Keimer had bought for four years also, and was to make him a compositor. David Harry, a country lad, was an indented apprentice.

Such were the persons who constituted Keimer's force in the printing-office, and whom he had hired under an

express agreement to teach them several branches of business of which he knew little or nothing himself.

To the quick and observant mind of Benjamin, it soon became evident that Keimer's leading motive for offering him more than ordinary wages, was to obtain, in him, a person who could fulfil the agreement he was not competent himself to perform, by teaching his workmen the several parts of the printer's trade; and that when this should be done, as Keimer had them all bound to him for a considerable period, he would then be able to carry on his business without Benjamin's further assistance. Nevertheless, though seeing all this, and the fraudulent spirit which had influenced Keimer, Benjamin went quietly forward, arranged the printing-office, which was in utter confusion, and not only introduced order and discipline among the hands, but taught them how to execute their work in a workmanlike manner.

The case of George Webb was peculiar. That a young man of good parts, who had been a member of Oxford university, should be found, at so early an age, in a foreign land, and in the condition of that class of pauper immigrants, who, from selling their time and service for a term of years, to enable them to pay the expenses of immigration, are called redemptioners, was certainly not a little singular; and the further notice left of him by Franklin, contains a lesson sufficiently interesting and monitory to be somewhat more fully presented.

From his own account of himself to Franklin, it appears that he was about eighteen years old, and was born at Gloucester, in England, where he was placed at a grammar-school to be fitted for the university. He was one of the wits of the school, wrote verses, and distinguished himself among the boys as a player, in the dramatic pieces performed at the school exhibitions.

On being sent to the university he remained there discontentedly for about a year, "wishing of all things to see London and become a player." Upon receiving his last quarterly allowance, therefore, instead of paying his bills at Oxford, he ran away to London; but finding himself unable to join the players, he fell into bad company, squandered his money, pawned his clothes to procure food, and while roaming the streets one day, a printed notice being handed to him, offering employment to all who would go into service in America, he caught at the proposals, executed the necessary contract, was immediately shipped, and left England, without even a line to his friends to tell them whither he was going. "He was," says Franklin, "lively, witty, good-natured, and a pleasant companion; but idle, thoughtless, and imprudent, to the last degree."

Such being the character of this youth, it is easy to see that his whole career, and the result of it, in the sale of himself for four years to Keimer, were but the natural and legitimate consequence of very sufficient causes.

The young Irishman, John, soon eloped and disappeared; but with the other hands Benjamin lived on very pleasant terms, inasmuch as they found Keimer incapable of teaching them anything, while they were daily advancing in the knowledge of their business, under the instruction and supervision of Benjamin, whom they respected accordingly. He was, moreover, adding to the number of his agreeable and valuable acquaintances among the residents of the town; and as he did not work on Saturday, which was his employer's sabbath, he had two days in the week at his own disposal, which he devoted principally to reading. His services, also, at this period, were so very important to Keimer, that from him, too, he received unusual civility, accompanied by various manifestations of great seeming regard; so

that, as he relates, nothing now gave him any uneasiness, but his debt to Vernon, which he had been too inattentive to economy to be enabled yet to pay. His creditor, however, had not yet asked for it.

There was no type-foundry at that time in either of the colonies; and as the printing-office became occasionally deficient in *sorts*, Benjamin had recourse to his own ingenuity to supply such wants.

"I had seen type cast at St. James's, in London," says he, "but without much attention to the manner. However, I contrived a mould, and made use of the letters we had as puncheons, struck the matrices in lead, and thus supplied in a pretty tolerable way all deficiencies. I also engraved several things on occasion; made the ink; was warehouse-man, and, in short, quite a *factotum*."

Notwithstanding all this, however, and the exemplary good faith and success with which he had managed his department of Keimer's business, doing for him what he was wholly incompetent himself to do, that person began in due time to betray his inherent knavery, and the real object for which Benjamin had been engaged. When a sufficient period had elapsed for the benefits of Benjamin's instruction and superintendence to manifest themselves, and the workmen in the office had come to understand their business so as to perform it in a creditable manner, Keimer's deportment began to change; and when he paid Benjamin his wages at the end of his second quarter, he gave him to understand that he found his pay burdensome, and thought he ought to consent to some abatement. "He grew by degrees less civil, put on more the airs of a master, frequently found fault, was captious, and seemed ready for an outbreak."

Benjamin bore this change of treatment for a while, with a good degree of patience, and the more so, because he

generously ascribed it, in part at least, to the irritable state of mind produced by the embarrassment of his affairs. A trifling occurrence, however, pretty soon put a sudden end to their connection.

An unusual noise in the neighborhood, one day, induced Benjamin to put his head out of the window to see what occasioned it. Keimer, who was in the street, observing this, called out to him in a loud, imperious tone, and with reproachful language, to mind his business. This insult was rendered particularly galling, by the fact that it was witnessed by many of the neighbors, the same noise having drawn most of them to their doors and windows; and as Keimer went immediately up into the office, and there renewed his insolent abuse, Benjamin's patience and good nature were exhausted, and he retorted upon him with great indignation. Keimer gave the stipulated quarter's notice for dissolving their contract, at the same time declaring his wish that it could be shortened. Benjamin told him he could have his wish, for he should instantly quit him; and, taking his hat, forthwith left the printing-office, requesting Meredith, whom he met below, to take care of such of his things as were in the office, and bring them to his lodgings.

Meredith readily complied with the request, for he had become strongly attached to Benjamin; and when, in the evening, he went to the lodgings of the latter, they not only talked over the occurrences of the day and the condition of Keimer and his affairs, but held also, a long conversation upon their own situations and prospects. As that conversation led to important results, its general tenor is here stated.

Meredith was extremely desirous that his instructor and friend should continue in Keimer's printing-office, as long as he should himself remain there. Benjamin, it appears, had begun to think seriously of returning to his

native town. In this interview, however, Meredith induced him to abandon that idea, reminding him that Keimer was in debt for every part of his establishment; that his creditors were growing very apprehensive about their pay; that he managed all his concerns in the loosest and most ruinous manner, sometimes selling things at bare cost, when hard pressed for cash, and sometimes making sales on credit, without even keeping an account of them; that bankruptcy must, therefore, inevitably overtake him soon, and thus make an opening, which Benjamin might occupy to certain and great advantage.

When Benjamin urged his utter inability to avail himself of the contemplated opening, from his want of money, Meredith expressed the most confident belief that his father, who entertained a very favorable opinion of Benjamin, would furnish the requisite money, provided a partnership could be formed between the two young men; that if Benjamin would agree to such an arrangement, they could, by spring, when his own engagement with Keimer would expire, have a press, types, and a full printing-office equipment, fresh from London, and be ready to carry their plan promptly into effect; and frankly admitting his own deficiencies as a workman, as well as his ignorance of the trade, he concluded by proposing that, if Benjamin consented to the project, his skill and knowledge of the business should be considered equivalent to the money and stock contributed on his own account, and they would divide the proceeds of the whole concern equally.

Such a proposition could not be otherwise than acceptable to Benjamin, and he at once declared his assent to it. Mr. Meredith, the elder, being in town, Benjamin, on conferring with him, found that he approved of the proposed arrangement, not only on account of its probable advantages in reference to business, but for the ad-

ditional reason that Benjamin had so much influence with his son, as to have already induced him to abstain, for a considerable period, from the perilous practice of frequent tippling, and would, he hoped, be able to cure him of it entirely, upon their becoming more closely connected by the ties of a common interest.

A list of the articles needed for the new partnership was drawn up by Benjamin and delivered to the elder Meredith, to be placed by him in the hands of a merchant who was to import them from London; and the whole affair was to be kept strictly to themselves, until, upon the arrival of their equipment, they should be ready at once to open shop.

There was at that time but one printing-office in Philadelphia, besides Keimer's; and that one, which was Bradford's, having no occasion for any additional hands, Benjamin was for a few days out of employment. Just then, however, it became known that the colonial authorities of New Jersey were about to issue a considerable amount of paper currency, called, in those days, "bills of credit," because they were issued on the credit of the colonial government. The printing of the bills in question would be a very desirable job, but to execute them properly would require types and cuts of several kinds, which nobody in either colony, except Benjamin, could prepare; and Keimer, anxious to do the work, but fearing lest Bradford should get the advantage of him, and secure the contract for the job, by engaging Benjamin, sent the latter a very conciliatory note, purporting that "old friends should not part for a few words, the effect of sudden passion," and earnestly desiring him to come back to his former situation.

To this request Benjamin yielded, chiefly through the persuasion of Meredith, who urged the benefit which would accrue to himself from the instruction and super-

vision of his friend and teacher; and on returning, he found Keimer disposed to be very civil, and to render his situation in all respects pleasant.

To crown this reconciliation, and fill for the time, the measure of Keimer's content, he obtained the Jersey contract, and for the neater and more satisfactory execution of it, Benjamin "contrived," as he says, "a copperplate press, the first that had been seen in the country, and cut several ornaments and checks for the bills." As the work was to be performed at Burlington, N. J., he went thither with Keimer, and completed the job in the most acceptable manner; the latter receiving for it a sum considerable enough to patch up his credit, and enable him to continue his business for some time longer.

This job, in its general and permanent results, however, was far more advantageous to Benjamin, than to his employer. While at Burlington, he became personally acquainted with a considerable number of the leading men of that colony. The provincial assembly, then sitting, raised a committee to superintend the printing of these bills, and especially to see that no more should be struck off than the number authorized by law. For the satisfactory discharge of this duty, it was deemed proper that some one of the committee should be in constant attendance upon the press, and he was usually accompanied by one or more of his friends. The public station and character of these men, the nature of the business in hand, and the topics suggested by these circumstances, gave occasion for much pleasant and profitable conversation, in which Benjamin, being far better qualified than Keimer to participate, received the chief attention of their visiters; and so favorable was the impression, which his intelligence, good sense, and general deportment, made upon them, that he soon began to receive invitations to their houses; and while his companion was comparative-

ly neglected, he became himself the object of many civilities, which not only ripened into various lasting personal friendships, but helped to prepare the way for that rapid development of public esteem and confidence, which, not very long after, became so universal and so conspicuous.

Of the personal friends, whom his stay of not quite three months in Burlington, on this occasion, enabled him to count among his acquisitions, he has mentioned the names of several. Among them, besides various members of the Assembly, with whom his employment brought him into contact, were also the provincial secretary Samuel Bustill, one of the provincial judges by the name of Allen, and Isaac Ducrow the surveyor-general. "The last named person," says Franklin, "was a shrewd, sagacious old man, who told me that he began for himself, when young, by wheeling clay for the brick-makers; learned to write after he was of age; carried the chain for surveyors, who taught him surveying; and he had now, by his industry, acquired a good estate." Franklin adds that, without having said a word in relation to his own plans, Ducrow remarked to him: "I foresee that you will soon work this man [Keimer] out of his business, and make a fortune in it, at Philadelphia."

Such were some of the fruits, which the good sense and discretion, the information which had been so assiduously accumulated, and the conciliating manners of a young man but twenty-one years of age, enabled him to gather, in less than three months, in a place where he was previously a stranger, and while working as a tradesman.

CHAPTER XIII.

HIS ENTRANCE UPON MANHOOD — HIS PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTER — NEW ASSOCIATIONS.

FRANKLIN had now reached a stage in the journey of life of deeper interest, and involving cares of a wider range, and graver character than any he had yet encountered. The laws of the land, taking their rule from the statutes of nature, would no longer look upon him as under the guardianship or control of others. Thenceforward they would treat him as a man of full age, himself alone amenable for his conduct in whatever relations he might assume; and he was about to embark in business, not as a servant working for fixed wages, and comparatively exempt from the anxieties of forethought and accountability, but as himself a master and the employer of others, taking his place in the community as one of its members, with the serious responsibilities of life pressing directly upon him.

In his autobiography, when, long years after, he is looking back upon this important stage in his career, he presents an outline of his own character so far as it was then developed, and of the principles and opinions, with which he was about to commence manhood, conduct his private affairs, and perform his part as a member of society. This general estimate of himself, and of his moral condition, with the glance he gives at the history of his opinions and way of thinking on moral and religious sub-

jects, is instructive as showing how early and to what an unusual degree he had cultivated the habit of self examination, and how assiduously he had labored to settle his views on points of such weighty concern to every person, who has not forgotten that he is an accountable being; and as showing, also, notwithstanding grave errors and defects, how sincerely he sought for truth, and aimed to act toward his fellow-men, according to the requirements of justice, and the dictates of benevolence.

This account of himself will be best given chiefly in his own words, not merely for the sake of accuracy and the livelier interest they will impart to the subject, but also for the sake of justice; inasmuch as the frank honesty with which it is rendered, and his faults are recorded, is not only praiseworthy in itself, but formed one of the most salient and beautiful features of his character; and if candidly considered in connection with the tone of confession and self-censure which pervades the statement, will, it is believed, satisfy every fair-minded reader, that his errors of opinion were not the result of a perverse and intractable temper, or unteachable spirit, but the errors of an ingenuous youth, whose consciousness of mental power had been naturally exalted to over-confidence, by his obvious superiority to most of those with whom he had yet had an opportunity to measure himself; and that in the midst of mistakes he did not obstinately shut his mind against more enlightened convictions, but was ready cheerfully to receive truth, as well as eager to find it.

The exhibition, even of the errors, whether of opinion or conduct, of a man of so honest and frank a spirit, can hardly fail to be profitable, both for warning and imitation; especially, when, as in this instance, subsequent and wider observation of human life, and a richer experience,

led him, on fuller reflection and in the maturity of his faculties, to detect such errors and renounce them.

"Before I enter upon my public appearance in business," says he to his son, to whom his narrative is addressed, "it may be well to let you know the then state of my mind, with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far they influenced the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously, in the dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen, when after doubting by turns several points as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of the Revelation itself. Some books against deism fell into my hands, said to be the substance of sermons which had been preached at Boyle's lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me, quite contrary to what was intended by them. For the arguments of the deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations. In short I soon became a thorough deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but each of these having wronged me greatly, without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct toward me [he was another freethinker], and my own toward Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great [mental] trouble—I began to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful."

He then adverts to the pamphlet, which, as heretofore noticed, he wrote while working as a journeyman printer in London. In that pamphlet, taking for his sole premises God's infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, but wholly overlooking man's free agency, he had nevertheless extended his argument, not only to the works of creation and the ordinances of Providence, but to all human action also; that is, though taking for his *premises*

the attributes of the *Deity* only, yet embracing in his *argument* not only what the *Deity does*, but what *man* does also, he drew the sweeping conclusion that there can not possibly be anything wrong in the world; that virtue and vice are only empty names, having no real existence; and that, not merely in the works and government of God, but in human conduct also, "whatever *is*, is right."

Such was the scope of that crude performance. Of its fallacies, however, he soon became aware. Even before commencing business with Meredith, in less than two years after it was written, its acuteness and cogency had, as he freely confesses, dwindled exceedingly in his own eyes; and after a passing remark upon the unsatisfactory nature of all metaphysical reasoning on such topics, he proceeds as follows:—

"I grew convinced that *truth*, *sincerity*, and *integrity*, in dealings between man and man, were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I framed written resolutions, which still remain in my journal-book, to practise them ever while I lived. Revelation had, indeed, no weight with me, as such; but I entertained an opinion that, although certain actions might not be bad, *because* they were forbidden by it, or good, *because* it commanded them, yet probably those actions might be forbidden *because* they were *bad* for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own nature, all circumstances considered."

The sentiment avowed in the forepart of the passage just cited, is worthy of all commendation, and the resolutions mentioned were well fulfilled through a long and honorable life. And the view, expressed in the latter portion of the same passage, of the ground of moral obligation, however defective in itself, is clearly better than the doctrine of the pamphlet; for it admits the reality of the distinction between right and wrong, as well as the

existence of good and evil; and by its influence, as he believed, was he preserved in the main from such gross immorality as might otherwise have resulted from the want of fixed religious principle, during the perilous season of youth, passed so much among strangers as to feel little restraint from the observation and opinion of others. The remark with which, by way of inference, he closes the review of himself, as he was when youth merged in manhood, will, when compared with the esteem in which he was held by the community in which he lived, be allowed to be sufficiently modest. "I had, therefore," says he, "a tolerable character to begin the world with: I valued it properly, and I determined to preserve it."

The passage in the first of the extracts just presented, in which Franklin alludes to the effect on his mind produced by reading certain sermons on deism, and by the manner in which the argument was conducted, can not fail to suggest to every considerate mind some grave reflections. Doubtless the cause of revealed truth has been much aided by argument, when conducted with ability and learning, and in a candid and discreet spirit; and a full and lucid exhibition of the historical, as well as the intrinsic, evidences of the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred writings, is not only due to the momentous importance of the subject, but has been among the most efficient means of establishing their authority and spreading their doctrines. Nevertheless, before a man presents himself to the world as a champion of such a cause, it becomes him well to consider what are his qualifications for the contest. The Scriptures themselves recognise the fact, that there is sometimes a zeal which is not according to knowledge; and the history of Christianity, especially the controversial portion of it, shows but too plainly that some who have

written in its defence, would have done more wisely if they had left that defence to the arguments presented by the beauty of a Christian life, and the persuasion of a Christian example. A sedate and earnest mind, filled with the convictions of divine truth—a pious heart, warmed with sympathizing affections, and upheld by a faith and hope that can sustain adversity with cheerful resignation, and meet prosperity with a grateful and unselfish joy, as supplying the means, not of greater indulgence, but of a wider usefulness, and beaming over the whole pathway of life—have done more than all the volumes of polemics to shut the mouth of cavil, extend the influence of Christianity, and multiply its real followers.

Not long after the return of the two printers from Burlington to Philadelphia, the types and other furniture for the new partnership arrived from London; and both Meredith and Franklin were fortunate enough quietly to close their respective terms of service with Keimer, and leave him in peace, before he knew anything of their new arrangements. They hired a house near the market, at the moderate rent of twenty-four pounds; and to assist in paying it, as well as to furnish themselves with convenient board and lodging, they took as an under-tenant Thomas Godfrey, with his family.

Hardly had they set up their press, arranged their cases, and got ready for work, when George House, one of Franklin's acquaintances, introduced a man from the country, whom he had just met in the street, inquiring for a printer to do a small job for him. The new partners having exhausted their ready money in the multifarious details of preparation, this first piece of work, offering itself so opportunely and boding so well, was peculiarly gratifying. Indeed, so lively was the impression it made, that in recurring to it long after, Franklin de-

clares that "this countryman's five shillings, being the first-fruits, and coming so seasonably, gave him more pleasure than any crown he had since earned; and the gratitude he felt toward George House, had made him often more ready than he would otherwise, perhaps, have been, to assist young beginners."

It must surely be gratifying to the reader, to observe how the incidents of life, even such as might usually be deemed unimportant, touched the feelings of such a man as Franklin, and instilled their lessons. It is in this way that common occurrences become instructive, and the mind is enriched and enlarged by experience.

There was, it seems, in Philadelphia (and rarely is there to be found a neighborhood free from a similar pest), one of those unhappy persons called croakers; who never see the sun; whose lives pass under a continual cloud; who can discern in every new enterprise nothing but a new prognostic of evil; who speak only to prophesy disaster; and though every prediction be regularly confuted by results, whose faith in their own inspiration, unaffected alike by arguments and events, remains steadfast and immoveable.

This Philadelphia croaker is described as "a person of note, an elderly man, with a wise look, and a very grave manner of speaking;" and while yet personally unknown to Franklin, seeing him one day at his door, stopped, and asked if he was the young man who had recently opened a new printing-office. "Being answered in the affirmative," says Franklin, "he said he was sorry for me, because it was an expensive undertaking, and the expense would be lost; for Philadelphia was a sinking place; half the people already bankrupts, or nearly so; all appearances to the contrary, such as new buildings and the rise of rents, being to his certain knowledge, fallacious; for they were, in fact, the very

things that would ruin us;" and he proceeded with such a specification of present and coming calamities, as served to depress, for the moment, even the manly hopeful spirit and good sense of young Franklin, who, had this woful recital been made to him before he embarked with Meredith, would probably, as he relates himself, have been deterred from the undertaking.

The "certain knowledge" of this croaker, proved, however, as usual in such cases, far less certain than his folly; and the faithfulness of Providence, as well as the wisdom of those who trust in it, was abundantly vindicated by the result. "This person," as Franklin adds, "continued to live in this decaying place, and to declaim in the same strain, refusing for many years to buy a house there, because all was going to destruction; and at last I had the pleasure of seeing him give five times as much for one, as he might have bought it for, when he first began croaking."

While young Franklin was thus employed in his trade, and was making his way into business, he did not by any means neglect the improvement of his mind and his advancement in knowledge. The number of his acquaintances in Philadelphia had also become considerably extended, and in the course of the autumn of 1727, he induced most of the more intelligent among them, to organize themselves as a club for mutual improvement, under the name of the "Junto," to meet every Friday evening.

The plan and regulations of this club were digested and drawn up by Franklin. Each member in turn was required to present to the club one or more questions "on any point of morals, politics, or natural philosophy," to be debated at their weekly meetings; and once in every three months each was also to produce a more elaborate essay, digested and written by himself, on any subject he

might choose. The debates, at the weekly meetings, were to be "conducted in a sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute, or desire of victory;" and the better to preserve their temper, candor, and decorum, "all expressions of positiveness of opinion, and all direct contradiction," were, after a little experience in the matter, "made contraband, and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties."

To show how much well-directed thought was bestowed upon the principles, on which this club was organized and conducted, and to account for the eminent usefulness it attained and its consequent remarkable duration, some of its regulations and modes of proceeding are here presented: they will, moreover, furnish valuable hints to others disposed to avail themselves of similar means of mental and moral improvement, as well as help to illustrate the development and tendencies at that time, of Franklin's mind, from which they chiefly proceeded.

A permanent list of queries was prepared, of which every member was bound to keep by him a copy; and at each meeting it was the president's first duty, on taking the chair, to put the following question, to be considered as addressed to each member present: "Have you read over these queries this morning, in order to consider what you might have to offer to the Junto, touching any one of them?" Whereupon the several members made answer, in proper order, according to the matter they had for remark.

To show the range and aim of these standing queries, the substance of a number of them may be stated as follows: the first one inquired if any member had found, in the book he had last read, in any department of science, literature, or the mechanic arts, anything of such claim to attention, that it would be useful to lay it before the club. Another query asked if any member knew of

any recent act of any citizen, marked by such merit as to deserve especial praise and imitation, or of any error or misconduct, against which the members should be warned. Others inquired if any particularly unhappy effects of intemperance, passion, or other vice or folly, had been recently observed; or any marked and happy effects of temperance, prudence, moderation, or other virtue; if any deserving stranger had recently come to the city, to whom the club could render any useful aid; if any member desired the friendship of some person, which one of the club could with propriety procure for him, or if he could be aided by them in any other honorable way; if there was any meritorious young man just starting in business, to whom they could render any assistance; if any member had recently received important benefits from some person not present; if any member was engaged in any important undertaking, in which he could be aided by the counsel and information of the club, or any of its associates; if any idea, or plan, had recently occurred to any member, which might be rendered useful to any class of people, to their own community, or to men generally; if any special defect, or mischief, had been recently perceived in any of the laws of the province, and if any effectual remedy could be pointed out, so as to make it expedient to lay the matter before the provincial assembly; or if any recent encroachment upon the rights and liberties of the people had been detected.

These inquiries, it will be seen, appertain to the social relations of men, and bear directly upon their social duties; and their tendency to promote the habitual discharge of those duties, by bringing them regularly forward, every week, for serious acknowledgment and consideration, seems too palpable to be disputed. The faithful observance of the principles of conduct involved in them, was well calculated to encourage habits of self-examination,

and self-discipline, on the part of individuals, and to foster mutual goodwill, not only among the associates of the Junto, but toward men generally; and by calling into exercise a more vigilant public spirit, to form more valuable members of the commonwealth.

But these standing queries, which formed so peculiar and remarkable a feature of this club, were designed, not as doubtful points to be debated, but as modes of presenting to the attention of the members, just occasions for the discharge of acknowledged obligations. They were calls to duty, not subjects for dispute; and belonged to that part of the organization intended for the *moral* improvement of the associates of the Junto. Their *mental* improvement and advancement in useful knowledge, they sought in the discussion of other questions of a different nature, and in the investigations requisite to render such discussion profitable.

From the few published specimens of this class of questions, it would seem that the forms and institutions of government, the rights of the people, the principles of political economy, the permanent interests of the country, the legislation of the British government relating to the colonies, and other points of general politics, stood first in favor, and the various departments of natural philosophy next, as supplying subjects for discussion; though points of practical morality and the subtleties of metaphysical speculation were occasionally interspersed. Viewed collectively, however, they show that the discussions of the Junto took a wide and elevated range; and the research they called for, together with the exercise of the best powers of the mind in arranging materials and framing arguments, tended to foster a taste for earnest study, well suited to exert a wholesome influence on personal character, inspire manly views of duty, and give a higher value to life.

The terms of admission to this club were as peculiar as its standing queries. These, like those, turned exclusively on the social relations. Instead of demanding money in the form of initiation fees, they required of the applicant for admission a simple declaration that he harbored no inimical feeling toward any existing member; that he cherished a sentiment of goodwill toward his fellow-men generally, irrespective of sect or party; that no man ought to be harmed on account of his opinions merely; and that he held truth in esteem for its own sake and would endeavor to seek it, receive it, and impart it, in a spirit of candor and impartiality.

Such were the origin, scope, and spirit of an association, which acquired a high local reputation in its day, proved exceedingly useful to its members, exerted a valuable influence in the community, and even upon the public affairs of the province of Pennsylvania; and after a prosperous existence of forty years, was selected as the healthy and vigorous stock, planted and tended by Franklin, on which, chiefly by the instrumentality of the same assiduous and enlightened cultivator, was engrafted the American Philosophical Society, of which also he was the first president, and which has borne still more abundant fruit, the volumes of its transactions having been among the most efficient aids to the progress of science in this country.

CHAPTER XIV.

USEFULNESS OF THE JUNTO — ORIGINAL MEMBERS — BUSINESS — GROWTH IN PUBLIC ESTEEM — OPINIONS.

The account of the Junto given in the preceding chapter, has been made somewhat full, not merely from a belief that it would be both gratifying and useful, but mainly because it was one of the early works of Franklin, and in truth, if duly considered in its various bearings, the most important work he had yet performed. Speaking of it himself, in his autobiography, he pronounces it, and with good reason, "the best school of philosophy, morals, and politics, then existing in the province;" and he wisely ranks among its benefits, not only the research and taste for solid studies, which it promoted, but also the "better habits of conversation," which resulted from compliance with regulations requiring mutual deference, courtesy, and candor, and forbidding all direct contradiction and positiveness of assertion, in conversational discussion, as well as in more formal debate — habits to which, as the chief cause, he justly ascribes the remarkable success and duration of the club.

Nor was this all. The most striking peculiarities of that association, were but the embodiment of some of the most marked characteristics of the mind and modes of thinking from which they proceeded; and the pertinence of the sketch given, as well as its intrinsic interest, in this connection, is further seen in the conclusive evidence it furnishes,

of the manly studies which must even then have occupied most of Franklin's time not demanded by his business; thus showing how early and industriously he began to prepare himself for those philosophical inquiries, in which he attained such distinction, and to accumulate those ample stores of political knowledge, and enter upon that training of himself in the principles of civil liberty and just government, which enabled him to render, during almost half a century, such important service to his country.

Of such an association, which not only proved eminently successful in promoting its direct objects, but exerted an important influence in various ways, on the subsequent career of its chief founder, it will be gratifying to know something of his original associates, and especially to see from what occupations, himself a young tradesman working daily for his daily bread, he obtained his earliest coadjutors, in this honorable endeavor to enlarge their knowledge, and enhance their individual value and means of usefulness. For this purpose we copy Franklin's own rapid and graphic sketch of the first members of the club.

The first one named was Joseph Breintnall, "a copier of deeds for the scriveners; a good-natured, friendly, middle-aged man; a great lover of poetry, reading all he could meet with, and writing some that was tolerable; very ingenious in making little knick-knacks, and of sensible conversation."

Next was Thomas Godfrey, "a self-taught mathematician, great in his way, and afterward inventor of what is now called *Hadley's Quadrant.* But he knew little *out of his way*, and was not a pleasing companion; as, like most great mathematicians I have met with, he expected universal precision in everything said, or was for ever denying or distinguishing upon trifles, to the disturbance of all conversation. He soon left us."

Another was Nicholas Scull, "a surveyor, afterward surveyor-general; who loved books, and sometimes made a few verses."

Another was William Parsons, "bred a shoemaker, but loving reading, had acquired a considerable share of mathematics, which he first studied with a view to astrology, and afterward laughed at it. He also became surveyor-general.'

Another was William Maugridge, "a joiner, but a most exquisite mechanic, and a solid sensible man."

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb, were also members, but with them the reader is already acquainted.

Next was Robert Grace, "a young gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty; a lover of punning and of his friends."

The last one named was William Coleman, "then a merchant's clerk," says Franklin, "about my own age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals, of almost any man I ever met with. He became afterward a merchant of great note, and one of our provincial judges. Our friendship continued without interruption, to his death, upward of forty years."

To this brief catalogue of the first members of the Junto, time added, at intervals, not a few of the ornaments of Philadelphia, and among them, some names, besides that of Franklin, of a wide and lasting celebrity.

Among the extraneous and collateral benefits which soon began to accrue to the principal founder of this club, from his connection with it, was an increase of business for the young firm of Meredith and Franklin. Indeed, it was one of the specified objects of the club, though a subordinate one, and a recognised duty of the members, to promote the rightful private interests of each other, whenever opportunity should enable them to do so,

by just and honorable means. In conformity with this obligation, Joseph Brientnall, who was a Quaker, procured for the new partnership the printing of forty sheets of a History of the Quakers, the other sheets having been engaged to Keimer.

The rate of pay for this job, however, is stated to have been very scanty; and to make it yield any profit whatever, it was necessary "to work exceeding hard." The size of the book was *folio;* the paper of the sort then called *pro patria;* the type for the text *pica*, and for the notes *long primer*. Of these folio pages, "I composed," says Franklin, "a sheet a day, and Meredith worked it off at the press. It was often 11 o'clock at night, and sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution [of the types thus set] for the next day's work; as the little jobs sent in by our other friends, now and then put us back. But so determined was I to continue doing a sheet a day of the folio, that one night, when, having *imposed* my *forms*, I thought my day's work was over, one of them by accident was broken, and two of the pages reduced to *pi*. I immediately distributed and composed it over again, before I went to bed."

This was, indeed, "working hard." But such persevering industry soon began to yield its appropriate reward; for it soon became obvious to the community, and gave a character, which secured confidence and credit. The merchants of Philadelphia, it appears, had a club called the *Every-Night Club*. The new partnership in the printing business having been casually mentioned in this club, one evening, the opinion was pretty generally expressed that "it must fail, there being already two printers in the place." One of the company, however, (Dr. Baird,) thought differently; for, said he, "the industry of that Franklin is superior to anything I ever saw of the kind. I see him still at work when I go

home from the club, and he is at work again before his neighbors are out of bed."

The words of Dr. Baird made an impression on his hearers, which produced shortly after, from one of them, a spontaneous offer to these industrious printers to supply them with a stock of stationery. But, though gratified by the offer, they declined it, not being disposed then to take up that branch of business. The remark which Franklin adds to his relation of these incidents is worthy of attention. "I mention this industry the more freely," says he, "that those of my posterity who shall read it, may know the use of that virtue, when they see its effects in my favor, throughout this narrative." Such was the value placed upon industry, and the honor in which labor was held, by one of the wisest men of his own times or any other.

About this time, Franklin drew up one of the most remarkable papers to be found among his writings. It is entitled: "Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion;" and is dated the 20th of November, 1728, when he was approaching the end of his twenty-third year. Much thought was obviously bestowed upon it, both as to matter and method, and it is, in style and language, as polished and exact as anything he ever wrote. It is, in fact, a kind of liturgy—uniting a confession of faith with a formulary of worship, suited to the use of an individual in his private devotions; and it is manifestly pervaded by a deep feeling of sincerity. It is far too long for insertion here; and yet it has in it so much of its author, that to omit all notice of it would be to overlook some of the most marked peculiarities of his mental habits and modes of thinking, at that period of his life. For the illustration of those peculiarities, therefore, some account of this paper seems proper; but a brief one will suffice.

This document, then, states the author's belief in one

infinitely perfect, eternal, and supreme Deity; and in various classes of subordinate celestial beings, the highest of whom, though created and dependent, are very exalted, good, and powerful; invested with high functions by the one Supreme, whom they worship and obey; who are themselves also entitled to reverence and homage from all inferior intelligent creatures, including man; and one of whom is placed, with delegated authority, at the head of our world, as the more immediate superintendent of its affairs and occupants.

Following the articles of belief, comes the formulary of worship, arranged in three parts, entitled Adoration, Petition, and Thanks, agreeing in this respect, substantially, with the usual order of divine service, and constituting what the author denominates "Acts of Religion." To give a proper guidance to the mind at all times, while engaged in these acts, and to furnish it with fitting and worthy reasons for praise and thanksgiving, as well as with important and well-considered objects of supplication, this formulary was composed.

The first act, adoration, commences by reverently addressing the Deity as Creator and Father, and proceeds with ascriptions of praise for his power, wisdom, and goodness, as displayed in his works and laws, the order of nature, the course of his providence, the rectitude of his moral government, his abhorrence of all evil passions and wicked deeds, and his love for whatever is true, benevolent, and just.

Adoration is followed, first, by a short interval of meditation; then by a hymn; then by reading some discourse designed to promote the love and practice of virtue; then comes the second part, entitled "Petition," a series of supplications for moral and spiritual blessings; and then the service closes with "Thanks" for blessings already bestowed.

Of the peculiarities of sentiment indicated in this document, there is one which it may be interesting to notice more distinctly. Among all its petitions, there is not one for external prosperity. The Deity is supplicated only for moral and spiritual blessings; for mental soundness, right principles, virtuous sentiments, and rectitude of conduct; or, as related of Solomon, for "a wise and understanding heart," that he might discern the truth and do right; to which the riches, honor, and length of days not asked for, were bountifully added. For the peculiarity mentioned, the paper itself alleges, as the reason, that, in our human frailty and unforeseeing ignorance, we can never be certain that outward possessions may not prove a snare instead of a benefit; and that it is wiser, and more in the true spirit of filial trust, to "take no thought" for such things, but calmly rely on the established course of a beneficent Providence, for those means of comfortable living which are the usual recompense of steady industry and an honest life, inasmuch as "our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things."

Such are the scope and spirit of these petitions. To show the *form* in which they are offered, a specimen or two will suffice. They commence as follows:—

"That I may be preserved from atheism, impiety, and profaneness; and in my addresses to thee, avoid irreverence, ostentation, and hypocrisy—help me, O Father!"

"That I may be faithful to my country, careful for its good, valiant in its defence, and obedient to its laws, abhorring treason as much as tyranny—help me, O Father!"

Thus the petitions proceed, asking that the petitioner may be humble, sincere, merciful, forgiving, candid, ingenuous, faithful; liberal to the poor, tender to the feeble, reverent to the aged, compassionate to the wretched,

temperate in all things, watchful against pride and anger, ready to protect the innocent, humane, neighborly, hospitable to strangers, impartial in judgment, upright and fair in dealing, ever acting with probity and honor—grouping, in thirteen distinct paragraphs like the above in form, the endowments and qualities, the traits of character and principles of conduct, which belong to a good and useful man in the varied relations of life, and including "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, lovely, and of good report."

In the concluding part, thanks are rendered for "peace and liberty; for food and raiment, for corn, and wine, and milk, and every kind of healthful nourishment; for the common blessings of air and light; for useful fire and delicious water; for knowledge, literature, and every useful art; for friends and their prosperity, and for the fewness of his enemies;" the closing paragraph summing up his gratitude in the following comprehensive form :—

"For all thy innumerable benefits—for life, and reason, and the use of speech; for health, and joy, and every pleasant hour—good God, I thank thee!"

That the document described contains many elevated thoughts and just sentiments, no one will probably feel disposed to deny. Indeed, its general accordance with the purely preceptive portions of the New Testament is manifest. Considered as a summary of religious faith and of the *grounds* of practical morality, it may perhaps most properly be said to be *deficient*, rather than *wrong*. But the deficiency, as we regard it, is a very material one; inasmuch as it consists in the failure to recognise any authoritative revelation of truth from heaven, or any fact, principle, or rule of conduct, *peculiar* to Christianity; thus losing not only the inestimable benefit derivable from the highest sanctions even of the moral truths

it embraces, and the surest safeguards of the virtues it commends, but overlooking also what the experience of life, in every generation, has proved to be the most sustaining, ennobling, and consolatory views of the relations of the Deity to the human race; of the motives he has supplied, and the means he has in his mercy provided, for their highest improvement, their truest and most durable welfare.

Our task, however, is narration—not discussion; and opinions and principles are noticed, not as points to be argued here, but simply as facts necessary to a faithful and impartial exhibition of the mental history and progressive development of character, of the man whose life we are attempting to delineate.

Franklin being now established in his trade, and growing in the favor and confidence of the community, his business, as well as his habits of study and ready command of his pen, naturally suggested the idea of publishing a newspaper, which he determined to undertake as soon as he should feel a little more assured of his position. While he was maturing this design in his own mind, and waiting the proper time to announce it and commence the publication, George Webb—who, with means furnished by a generous female friend, had redeemed the remnant of time and service for which he was bound to Keimer—applied to Meredith and Franklin to be employed by them as a journeyman. They did not just then want more hands; but Franklin unwarily communicated to Webb his design respecting a newspaper, with the reasons which influenced him; and added that, when ready to start the publication, they would probably wish to employ him.

Franklin's expectation of success with his contemplated paper, was founded on his knowledge of the fact that Bradford's paper, the only one then published in

the place, though a poor thing and most unskilfully managed in all respects, nevertheless paid well; and he felt therefore, the strongest confidence that a well-conducted paper—that should present its readers with, not only a general and well-compiled summary of news, but sensible and intelligent views of public affairs, and other matters worth reading, on subjects in which people generally took an interest—would be certain to find a liberal and growing support.

This communication was made to Webb in strict confidence; but he was base enough to disclose the whole project, without delay, to Keimer, who still more dishonorably went immediately to work, without scruple, to avail himself of Franklin's ideas, and to pilfer for himself the advantages justly due to another, by forthwith issuing proposals for publishing a newspaper himself, and Webb was engaged to assist him.

This treachery excited the just indignation of Franklin, who, with characteristic promptitude and energy, but by fair and legitimate means, straightway set himself to thwart the base interlopers, by giving to Bradford's paper attractions it had never before possessed. For this purpose he commenced a series of communications, under the title of the "Busy-Body;" and Bradford extended the demand for his "Weekly Mercury," by inserting them.

This series was commenced in the forepart of February, 1729—not many days after Franklin had completed the twenty-third year of his age. The first five numbers, with the eighth, being unquestionably from his pen, are included in the last and fullest collection of Franklin's writings, edited by Dr. Sparks. The other twenty-four numbers of the series, thirty-two in all, are said to have been written chiefly, if not exclusively, by Franklin's worthy friend Brientnall, already known as

a member of the Junto. In this way the two friends drew the public curiosity and attention to Bradford's Mercury so effectually, that Keimer's proposals were slighted and neglected. Still, notwithstanding the ridicule and contempt which he brought upon himself, Keimer, with the obstinate and perverse temper which formed so large an ingredient in his nature, persisted in starting his paper. After forcing it along, however, with great difficulty for several months, with a list of subscribers never exceeding ninety in number, he at last came, long before the end of the first year, with an offer to sell out, for a very small consideration, to Franklin, who, being now entirely prepared to go forward with his original design, closed with Keimer at once, and soon made the paper productive property.

Franklin's numbers of the Busy-Body were his first attempt at essay-writing; and they do him credit. He takes the office of a *censor morum;* not, however, in the narrow modern sense, confining his strictures to mere manners; but in the old and wider sense, including all the ways of men, and aiming at such notions and practices, whether commonly prevalent or occurring occasionally, as offer fair subjects for either grave admonition or ridicule and satire; and both his matter and style indicate, not only unusual talents, but a degree of culture altogether surprising in a young mechanic of twenty-three, who had been compelled to earn his living with the labor of his hands. The matter gives ample evidence of an observant mind, capable of nice discrimination, abounding with good sense, and nourished by reading; while the style is natural, simple, and pure — flowing on smoothly, aiming only to convey the author's ideas in appropriate language, without straining after ornament, or that exaggerated force of expression which is so apt to run into bombast or fustian, from which

never was writer more entirely free. It may be added, moreover, that the practical test, when applied to these pieces, not less than judicious criticism, bears witness to their merit; for they were successful in accomplishing their purpose.

From a passage in the 5th number of the Busy-Body it seems that Keimer had entitled his paper, "The Instructor. On passing to the new proprietors, they changed the title to "Pennsylvania Gazette," but retained the numbering, and their first issue was numbered 40, dated September 25th, 1729; and though Meredith was at best but an indifferent workman, and had become a very intemperate drinker, yet Franklin, who had in fact the whole control of their business, took care that the paper should, on first coming from their press, exhibit, with its new type and workmanlike execution, an appearance much superior to anything of the kind yet seen in that community.

The improved aspect of the paper, and the character of its contents, at once attracted general attention. Some remarks from Franklin's pen, relative to a controversy then existing in Massachusetts, between the governor and the assembly of that colony, made such an impression upon the leading men in Philadelphia, that the paper and its new conductor became the frequent subject of their conversation, and in a few weeks their names were all on the subscription-list of the Gazette. This example of the leading men proved contagious, and "the list went on growing continually" — a result in which Franklin could recognise, much to his satisfaction, some of the advantages, as he modestly expresses it, "of having learned a little to scribble."

The controversy mentioned, between the Massachusetts assembly, and Burnet, then governor of that colony, related to the settlement of a salary for that officer; and

as it involved substantially the same leading principles, which, forty-seven years later, produced the Declaration of Independence, and the war by which it was vindicated, it will be interesting to see that the same man, who, when his head was whitening with age, assisted to make that Declaration, had, in the bloom of his first manhood, maintained the chartered rights and liberties of his country.

It was not the *amount* of salary, but the *authority* under which it was *claimed*, and the *manner* in which the permanent settlement of it was *demanded*, that caused the controversy in question. Governor Burnet, by virtue of his instructions from the British cabinet, required of the assembly an immediate and permanent grant of a thousand pounds sterling yearly, to him and his successors. This the assembly refused, on the ground that such demand was repugnant both to the English constitution and to the charter of the colony; that no grant of their own money could be rightfully made, but by their own free will, and in such measure, and for such time, as they should consider just, or expedient; that thus only had their grants of money been made in time past, and thus only should they be made in time to come; that as the governor was appointed by the king, if his salary were to be fixed in amount and permanent, he would be rendered too independent of the colony to consult its welfare; for they judged, to use Franklin's words, that "there should be a mutual dependence between the *governor* and the *governed*, and that to make the governor independent, would be dangerous to their liberties, and the ready way to establish tyranny;" and he holds up the assembly to commendation for continuing "thus resolutely to abide by what they think their right and that of the people they represent," notwithstanding the threats, or intrigues of the governor, or

his means of influence derived from the numerous posts of honor and profit at his disposal.

Franklin was now beginning to reap the recompense of his early and persevering industry in training himself as a writer; and the men of intelligence and foresight in the community about him, "seeing a newspaper now in the hands of those who could also handle a pen," deemed it expedient to give it their countenance. In doing this, however, there is reason to believe that they were not all influenced by a purely disinterested desire to promote the success of the young tradesman, simply because he deserved it, or from a liberal public spirit only. Their own advantage, immediate, or remote, seems to have had place among the motives of some; and very properly too, if such advantage was to be sought by none but worthy means. At all events, it was probably not long before all were permitted to understand, whatever might have been the inducements of any to favor the new paper and its conductor, that neither of these could be used for any purpose not consistent with truth, or justice, or a manly and candid freedom.

There is an anecdote that strikingly exemplifies what has last been said; and though its date is not very exactly ascertained, it may be as fitly told in this connection as in any. It is not related by Franklin himself, but it has obtained such currency, is so well worthy of record for the lesson it teaches, and has so much characteristic, if not literal truth, that it should not be omitted. It runs substantially as follows: —

Having made in his paper some rather free and pungent strictures on the public acts of certain leading men of the city, some of Franklin's patrons thought fit to reprove him for so doing, and told him that others of his friends also disliked the strain of his remarks. Having calmly heard what they had to say, he invited them

Supper of Sawdust-Pudding and Water.

to sup with him, that evening, and to bring with them the other persons alluded to. When the appointed hour came, bringing his guests with it, he received them courteously, and again listened, with undisturbed temper, to their well-meant remonstrances. On repairing to the supper-table, great was their surprise at finding on it only two coarse Indian puddings, made of unbolted meal called "sawdust," to eat, and a stout jug of water, to drink. They civilly suppressed their surprise as well as they could, while their host, with laudable self-possession, helped them bountifully to pudding, and with a relishing air partook freely of it himself; hospitably pressing them, the while, to follow his example. This they politely strove to do; but the effort was unavailing; the pudding would not go down. After enjoying, for a reasonable time, the struggle between the politeness of his guests and their disgust at the pudding, Franklin rose, and with a smile and a bow that served for underscoring, spoke to them these significant words:— "My friends, he who can live on sawdust-pudding and water, as I can, is not dependent on any man's patronage."

CHAPTER XV.

IS MADE PUBLIC PRINTER — AN ERROR CORRECTED — DISSOLVES PARTNERSHIP — REAL FRIENDS — CONTINUES RISING — PAPER MONEY.

While Franklin was thus industriously employed, extending his business by the neatness and despatch with which he executed his work, and resolutely maintaining his own independence and the legitimate freedom of the press, his neighbor Bradford, though his private custom was gradually diminishing, still continued printer for the public authorities of the province. But his work was always done in a slovenly manner; and having about this time, sent from his office an address of the colonial assembly to the governor, more carelessly done and more crowded with blunders than usual, Franklin reprinted it with particular neatness and accuracy, and caused a copy of it to be laid before each member of the assembly. The difference between the two editions was so palpable and great, that it could not fail to strike the most heedless; and the members were so much pleased with the reprint, that they gave the whole of the public printing, by a strong vote, to Franklin & Meredith, for the year then commencing.

This vote of the assembly was, of course, very gratifying as well as advantageous to Franklin (for Meredith's habitual intemperance had rendered him more of a burden than a benefit to their business), and it was an additional gratification to know that, among the friends who

had brought it to pass, was Mr. Hamilton, the eminent lawyer, to whom, as heretofore related, Franklin had rendered such valuable service, in London, by putting him on his guard against the plots of Riddlesden and Keith; and who took the occasion of this annual vote for a public printer, as he did every fair occasion that subsequently occurred, to repay that service with his active and efficient friendship.

The error, which had so long been a cause of anxiety and mortification to Franklin — into which, as will be remembered, he had been unwarily led by too much confidence in his early companion Collins — the error of lending to that misguided youth the money collected for Mr. Vernon, now at length produced the consequence foreboded, the amount being applied for, before he was in a condition to pay it. Much, however, as his self-esteem was wounded by not being able to pay over the money on demand, he had the moral firmness to do the next best thing in his power, by dealing frankly and truly with Vernon; not adding to his own humiliation and self-reproach by any weak attempt to misrepresent the matter, or to prevaricate. "Mr. Vernon," says Franklin, "about this time put me in mind of the debt I owed him; but he did not press me. I wrote to him an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, craving his forbearance a little longer, which he allowed me. As soon as I was able, I paid the principal with the interest and many thanks; so, *that* erratum was in some degree corrected."

It will be recollected that Franklin was expressly authorized to keep the money till it should be called for; and it nowhere appears that any earlier call than the one now mentioned, was ever made by Vernon; so that in reality, all the delay, in this affair, that could be justly complained of, or could be considered wrongful in the eye of the law, was that which took place subsequently

to the above-named letter of Vernon. Nevertheless, Franklin's own solicitude on the subject, dated from the time when he first became fully conscious of his error, in having thus subjected himself to a liability which he could not instantly meet; and as he had, clearly, taken the matter much more seriously to heart, than had Mr. Vernon, he felt proportionately grateful for the forbearance extended to him. Long years after, while he was residing at Paris as minister of the United States to the court of France, his sensibility to the liberal kindness of Vernon, it is gratifying to relate, was further manifested by rendering important service to a young kinsman of that gentleman.

A more serious embarrassment, in a mere pecuniary sense, and the more annoying from its having never been anticipated, now befell him. Mr. Meredith, senior, it will be remembered, was to furnish the money for setting up the firm of Franklin & Meredith in business. The whole sum to be furnished by him was two hundred pounds, one half of which he had paid up; but the other half, now overdue, was not forthcoming, and he was unable to raise it. The merchant who had imported the furniture of the printing-office, and to whom the money was due, after long waiting, lost his patience and commenced a suit against both the elder Meredith and the two partners. The regular course of the suit would give a little time; but as there was no real defence to be made, that time would soon run out; and if the money could not be raised to meet the judgment that must come, the whole establishment would be sold by the sheriff under an execution, and the prospects of two young men, now opening so fairly, be utterly blasted.

This unhappy state of things became known, of course, to Franklin's friends; and he now had occasion, not only to realize, with livelier emotions than ever before, the

advantages of that character he had established for resolute self denial and persevering industry, but to understand, also, with deeper insight, the nature and value of true friendship.

"In this distress," says he in his own account of this matter, "two true friends, whose kindness I have never forgotten, nor ever shall forget while I can remember, anything, came to me, separately and unknown to each other, and, without any application from me, offered each of them to advance me all the money that should be necessary to enable me to take the whole of the business upon myself, if that should be practicable; but they did not like my continuing the partnership with Meredith; who, as they said, was often seen drunk in the streets, or playing at low games in alehouses, much to our discredit."

Those two generous friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace, to whom the reader has been already introduced in the Junto. Straitened and sore-pressed as he was, however, and menaced with at least temporary ruin by losing the fruits of his long and arduous labor, Franklin now showed the real strength and nobleness of his character, by his reply to his friends. He told them that he considered himself under such obligations to the Merediths, for the advantages he had derived from his connection with them, that he could not, with honor and a good conscience, urge a dissolution of the partnership, so long as they entertained a hope of being able to perform their engagements; but, if they should find themselves wholly unable to do so, and the partnership be thus broken up, he should then feel perfectly free to avail himself of the proffered aid.

This affair was alike honorable to each of the parties concerned; to Franklin, for his fine sense of justice and upright dealing toward the Merediths; and to his two

friends, not only for the noble sentiments which prompted their generous offers, but also, in a case like this, for their really enlightened public spirit, in coming to the aid of one, who had given such unequivocal proofs of his ability and disposition to be useful to the community, and to render it yet greater and more valuable service.

The affairs of the partnership continued in the unpleasant and hopeless condition described, for a while longer, when Franklin one day said to his well-meaning but very unprofitable partner: "Perhaps your father is dissatisfied at the part you have undertaken, in this affair of ours, and is unwilling to advance for you *and me*, what he would, for *you*. If that is the case, tell me, and I will resign the whole to you, and go about my business." To this Meredith ingenuously answered: "No; my father has really been disappointed, and is really unable; and I am unwilling to distress him further. I see this is a business I am not fit for. I was bred a farmer, and it was folly in me to come to town, and put myself, at thirty years of age, an apprentice to learn a new trade. Many of our Welsh people are going to settle in North Carolina, where land is cheap. I am inclined to go with them and follow my old employment. You may find friends to assist you. If you will take the debts of the company upon you, return to my father the hundred pounds he has advanced, pay my little personal debts, and give me thirty pounds and a new saddle, I will relinquish the partnership and leave the whole in your hands.'

Considering all the circumstances of this case, and particularly the fact that Franklin was himself the very life of the concern, which would not have been worth a penny without him, it must be conceded that Meredith did not undervalue his own interest, in the terms proposed. But Franklin, looking no doubt more at the ca-

pabilities of the establishment, than at the results already attained, accepted the proposals on the spot; and the bargain thus promptly made, was duly executed in writing, before the parties separated.

Meredith, shortly after, with his thirty pounds and clear of debt, mounted his new saddle for North Carolina; "whence," says Franklin, "he sent me next year two long letters, containing the best account that had been given of that country, the climate, the soil, and husbandry; for in those matters he was very judicious." The letters, it is added, were published in the paper, and gave general satisfaction. Aside from his pernicious practice of drinking to excess, Meredith appears to have been a sensible and amiable man; and it is gratifying, in taking leave of him, to have some reason to believe that, on breaking off his unfortunate associations in Philadelphia, he was enabled to amend his life, and become a more useful and respectable man.

Having now dissolved his connection with the Merediths, in the most honorable manner, Franklin, with a clear conscience and freshened hopes, no longer hesitated to avail himself of the generous proffers of Coleman and Grace. That he might, however, be impartial in his obligations and gratitude, and not burden either of his two friends more heavily than his real exigences honestly required, he took from each of them a moiety of the whole sum he needed. He then proceeded at once to pay off all the debts of the partnership, and publish the proper legal notice of its dissolution; at the same time announcing that he should continue the business of the late firm by himself alone and on his own sole account. This affair was consummated in the summer of 1730, the notice of dissolution of the partnership, as published in his paper, bearing date the 14th of July in that year.

Franklin had now entered the latter half of his twen-

ty-fifth year; and events soon contributed to enhance the importance of his position, and to assign him a more important and influential part to act in the community.

The restrictions imposed by the mother-country upon the commerce, navigation, and manufactures of her American colonies, confined the industry of the great body of the colonial population almost exclusively to agriculture; that is, to the production of food, and of raw materials to be manufactured in England; thus preventing that varied employment of capital and labor, and that diversity of occupations, which are the natural results of the unobstructed progress of society, and indispensable to the completeness of its organization; which are, also, equally indispensable to any considerable extension of either external or internal trade; and the prosecution of which, in a large way, for the purpose of commercial exchange and sale, occasions the chief demand for money and gives it most of its practical social value; which, in fine, are necessary to the universal and gainful activity of an intelligent, industrious, and enterprising people, and their advancement in civilization.

As one of the consequences of this selfish and monopolizing policy of the mother-country, the colonies, cut off from the benefits of some of their most important natural advantages, suffered greatly in their business, and particularly from a much too scanty supply of circulating medium; hard-money, for a long time the only currency in use, being rendered very injuriously scarce.

To remedy this last-named evil as well as circumstances permitted, the colonial legislatures, one after another, resorted to paper-money in that form so well known in the colonial and revolutionary history of the country, as "bills of credit;" deriving their appellation from the fact that they depended for their value on the credit of the government issuing them. To sustain that

credit, however, the proceeds of specific taxes, or other public funds, were pledged for the redemption of the bills, which were put into circulation, partly in the way of payments made by government, but chiefly in the shape of loans to individuals, at a moderate rate of interest, and to be repaid in small annual instalments; the loans being usually secured by mortgages on real estate. In many cases, moreover, the bills were made a legal tender not only for the payment of dues to the government, but also in all private transactions.

The first issue of this kind of currency in Pennsylvania, was made in the year 1723, under an act of the provincial assembly passed in the preceding year, while Sir William Keith was yet governor. Depreciation was the chief danger to which such a currency was exposed; and as that danger was believed most likely to be incurred by an excessive issue, that is, by issuing an amount exceeding the real wants of the regular business and legitimate undertakings of the community, the assembly commenced cautiously, the amount of their first issue being limited to fifteen thousand pounds. Of this sum no part could be loaned but upon a mortgage of unincumbered land of twice the value of the loan, or upon ample pledges of plate actually deposited in the loan-office; the rate of interest was fixed at five per cent. to be paid yearly, together with an instalment of one eighth of the principal; the bills were made a legal tender in all cases, under the penalty of forfeiting the debt, or the particular commodity, for which they might be offered in payment; and still more effectually to maintain their value equal to that of gold and silver, penalties were enacted against any bargain, or sale, for a less sum in coin than in bills.

These provisions accomplished their object, and the business of the province soon manifested, by its exten-

sion and activity, the beneficial influence of this augmentation of the circulating medium. The testimony of Franklin on this point is explicit and conclusive. He first went to Philadelphia just about the time this first issue of paper-money was made; and the subject was of such deep concern to the whole community and so universally the principal topic of conversation, that it took strong hold of his mind. By the time its practical operation had become well developed, the Junto was organized, and this subject was elaborately discussed in that club, particularly by Franklin, who took his stand in favor of this currency, not for the sake of argument, but because he was thoroughly convinced of its utility, from his own observation of the increase of trade, employment, and population, produced by the issue of 1723.

When he first walked about Philadelphia, eating his roll of bread, (to use for the most part his own words,) he saw many a house in the principal streets, with bills —"to let"—on their doors; and so frequent were these notices, that they "made him think the inhabitants of the city were one after another deserting it;" whereas, in a few years under the impulse imparted to business by a more plentiful circulating medium, he "saw the old houses all occupied and many new ones building."

The act authorizing this first issue of bills of credit in Pennsylvania, provided, it should be remembered, that the loans under it should be repaid in eight annual instalments; and before Franklin closed accounts with the Merediths, the period limited for calling in and extinguishing these bills, was approaching so near its termination, that the public attention had again become fixed upon the subject, and its importance had once more made it the leading topic of discussion throughout the province.

The effects of this first trial, now before the eyes of all, were so evidently and generally beneficial, that the laboring classes, the men of small means and comparatively moderate possessions, who needed more or less credit, and whose industry, enterprise, and knowledge of business, enabled them to make an advantageous use of credit, were everywhere, in town and country, strongly in favor of the policy, which had furnished a more plentiful supply of the means of buying and selling, of giving employment to labor, of extending the cultivation of the land, augmenting the population, and bringing out the resources of the province; and all these classes of people, in view of the near approach of the time fixed for the withdrawal of those means, had begun to call, with great and growing earnestness, for the measures necessary, not only to prevent the serious injury which would result from the sudden withdrawal of the bills then in circulation, but for another and a somewhat larger issue, to meet the wants of the augmented business of the province, and to aid in still further developing its resources, and giving enterprise a still wider range.

While the great body of the people, however, were thus calling for a further supply of that which they had found so useful, the capitalists and men of wealth generally, either because, with a scanty currency, they would have a fuller control of the whole amount, or for other reasons, opposed the whole paper-money policy. They insisted that no legislative provisions and no condition of the community could prevent the depreciation of these bills; and that the inevitable operation of such a currency, when made a lawful tender in payment, either of debts already due, or of sums to accrue on future contracts and payable at a subsequent day, would be greatly injurious to creditors, because, in the prog-

ress of depreciation, the sums actually paid would be of less and less value, as compared with coin, though nominally equal.

At this juncture Franklin discussed this subject, in a pamphlet, entitled, "A Modest Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency." Though published anonymously, the authorship of the pamphlet was no secret; and being widely circulated, it exerted a controlling influence on public opinion. Aside from his occasional newspaper paragraphs, this was his first systematic discussion of any important question of public policy; and it is now extant among his writings. It is admirable for the fullness of knowledge, ability, and maturity of thought, which it displays; aud considered as the production of a young mechanic in his twenty-fourth year, it is a very remarkable performance.

Some of the views presented in this paper are now deemed erroneous, and some of its reasonings unsound. Yet, writers of distinguished ability even among those who hold different opinions on some points, admit that it also contains principles of great importance, which have stood the test of reason and experience, and some of which, though more fully developed and illustrated with more detail by later writers, have never been more distinctly recognised, or more clearly stated. It should be also observed, that in regard to some of the views which have been declared erroneous by one class of writers, that others perhaps equally able would pronounce a different judgment; while it is conceded on all hands, that the performance in question displays unusual power of philosophical analysis, with a profound and clear insight into the complex and difficult subject of which it treats; and that no one even of those have been accustomed to such investigations, can read this "Inquiry," without finding his ideas simplified and rendered more

definite on some points, and seeing the whole subject in a clearer light.

Franklin was all the better prepared for handling this subject, and presenting it to the public with clearness and force, by his having taken a leading part in the discussion of it in the Junto. Referring to the pamphlet, in his autobiography, he states that the people generally received it with favor, while the rich men disliked it, as it strengthened the call for another issue of paper-money; but the latter class having none among them able to answer it, their opposition to the proposed measure relaxed, so that at the next session of the assembly it was carried by a handsome majority.

The importance of Franklin's service in this matter was felt by the majority; and this fact, together with the natural desire to encourage so efficient a writer to employ his pen on subjects of public interest, with the further consideration that the work done at his press was always well done, induced the majority of the assembly to give him the printing of the new bills to be issued; "a profitable job," says he, "and a great help to me," as well as "another advantage gained by being able to write."

Continued experience so clearly demonstrated the beneficent operation of this paper-money, guarded as it was against depreciation, that the principles on which it was issued were subsequently, as he states, but little disputed; and the amount, augmented in several successive issues, rose at last, in 1739, to eighty thousand pounds; "trade, building, and inhabitants, all the while increasing." Subsequent reflection, however, further enlightened by a larger and more varied observation, induced him to add to his own account of the foregoing proceedings, his ultimate conviction "that there are limits" to the amount of such a currency, beyond which it may

prove injurious to those very interests, to which, when it is properly restricted and regulated, it can be rendered so advantageous.

It seems but just to add that so far as this policy was carried in Pennsylvania, it appears pretty clearly to have proved on the whole very beneficial in its direct influence on the internal interests of the province; that it was only when money was wanted for foreign remittances, that the bills of this local currency were perceived to be somewhat less valuable than gold and silver; though the discount upon them, even in such cases, was not large, and was by no means equal to the counterbalancing benefits which resulted from the increased activity their circulation imparted to trade, and the impulse they gave to the general prosperity of the people.

By such honorable means as have been indicated, Franklin was now thriving both in business and reputation. Not long after the printing of the new bills for Pennsylvania, he was employed to print the bills of a similar issue at Newcastle, for "The Three Lower Counties," as Delaware was then called. For this, which he regarded as another beneficial contract, "small things," as he expresses it, "appearing great to those in small circumstances," he was indebted to his distinguished friend, Hamilton, who also procured for him the printing of the journals and laws of the colonial government of Delaware, which he retained as long as he continued in the printing business.

Further to exemplify Franklin's assiduous industry in the management of his business, and especially his mechanical ingenuity and resource, it is but just to state that in the early part of his career, when he had yet but little cash to spare, any deficiency in the implements and apparatus of his trade was usually supplied by himself. Thus he contrived for himself the apparatus for

casting leaden types; executed cuts in wood, of various ornaments to embellish what the printers call job-work; made printer's ink; engraved vignettes on copper, and made his own press for taking impressions from such plates.

Another incident is related of him, which is not only interesting in itself, but testifies to the vigilance of his observation and his habit of turning whatever he observed to some useful account. It was he, who, as related in Watson's Annals of Philadelphia, first propagated in this country the *yellow willow*, now so common among us. A willow basket, in which he had received some package from abroad, having been thrown aside upon moist ground, had sprouted. Franklin seeing this, planted some cuttings of the sprouting rods, and from them, it is alleged, came our yellow willow, a useful plant not only for wicker-work, but for protecting the banks of streams.

Another incident of much greater importance, may be properly enough introduced in this connection. It is related by Dr. Sparks, on the authority of the distinguished French chemist, Chaptal; and it shows that our country is indebted to Franklin, in the first instance, for the knowledge and use of *gypsum*, as a fertilizer in agriculture. This article having originally been brought from Paris, was long known only by the name of *plaster of Paris;* and Chaptal, who rendered incalculable service to agriculture by applying chemical science to its improvement, in his work on *Agricultural Chemistry*, as quoted by Dr. Sparks, has the following passage:—

"As this celebrated philosopher," says Chaptal referring to Franklin, "wished that the effects of this manure should strike the gaze of cultivators, he wrote, in great letters formed by the use of the ground plaster, in a field of clover lying upon the great road: 'This has been

plastered.' The prodigious vegetation which was developed in the plastered portion, led him to adopt this method. Volumes upon the excellency of plaster would not have produced so speedy a revolution."

The mode thus chosen for recommending the new manure, by its unequivocal, practical directness and simplicity, was highly characteristic of Franklin; and the whole statement will enhance the popular respect and affection for his memory, by bringing home to general recognition what has been but little known.

About the time when Franklin had finished the printing of the Delaware bills, he added to his printing business that of a stationer; and he helped his custom by keeping, besides the usual articles of stationery, a constant supply of blank forms commonly used in conveyancing, and in legal proceedings in the courts of justice. In preparing these forms he was assisted by his friend Breintnall, who was himself a conveyancer; and being well arranged and carefully printed, their neatness and accuracy, much beyond anything previously furnished in that way, secured the custom of all who had occasion to use them. His assortment of the usual articles of stationery was also full, and thereto was added an ample supply of school-books, and other books for children. It is worth stating, too, as indicative of the impression he made on those with whom he associated, that one of the journeymen now in his employ, was a man with whom he had become acquainted in the London printing-offices, by the name of Whitmarsh, who, on arriving at Philadelphia, had gone at once to Franklin, and proved to be a diligent workman, and a worthy man. He had, also, as an indented apprentice, a young son of that Aquila Rose, whose death left the opening for employment, which was the particular inducement that led Franklin first to Philadelphia, and whose elegy furnished

him with some of his first earnings there, in working it off at the press, when it had been composed in type by the eccentric Keimer.

Persevering industry and personal attention to his business, with civil deportment, and constant care that whatever work he was employed to do, should be done promptly and in a neat, thorough, and workmanlike manner, united to the public spirit he had evinced, and his talents as a writer, were now producing for him their legitimate results; and his thrift enabled him to commence paying off the debt he had incurred in setting up his printing-office. His habits and course of life at this period, are well described in the following passage from his own pen :—

"In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman," says he, "I took care not only to be in reality industrious and frugal, but to *avoid even appearances to the contrary.* I dressed plain, and was seen at no places of idle diversion. I never went out a fishing, or shooting. A book, indeed, sometimes enticed me from my work; but that was seldom, was private, and gave no scandal; and to show that I was not above my business, I sometimes brought home the paper I purchased at the stores, through the streets on a wheel-barrow. Thus, being esteemed an industrious, thriving young man, and paying duly for what I bought, the merchants who imported stationery solicited my custom; others proposed supplying me with books, and I went on prosperously."

CHAPTER XVI.

RIVALS IN TRADE — FRUITLESS ATTEMPT AT MATCH-MAKING — HE MARRIES MISS READ — LIBRARIES — STUDIES — PROSPECTS.

While Franklin was thus prospering in business, and growing in the esteem of the community, Keimer, his former employer, was daily losing both custom and credit; and being compelled before long to sell out his whole stock in trade, to meet the demands of his creditors, he went off to Barbadoes, in the West Indies, where, after several years of poverty, he died in great indigence.

David Harry, who has already been mentioned as an apprentice to Keimer, but who had in fact been taught his trade by Franklin while working in Keimer's office, was the person who bought out his former master, and undertook to carry on the same business himself. Harry's friends were persons of considerable property and influence; and when he commenced business on his own account, Franklin felt no little solicitude lest his own prosperity should be seriously checked by one who seemed likely to be a powerful rival. To avoid any unfriendly competition, which could only prove injurious to both, he proposed to Harry to form a partnership. This proposal, however, says Franklin, "he, fortunately for me, rejected with scorn." Harry's foolish pride, expensive habits, indulgence in amusements, and consequent neglect of business, soon involved him in debt; his customers quit him, and he pretty soon followed Keimer to

Barbadoes, taking along with him his printing apparatus. "There," says Franklin, "the apprentice employed his former master as a journeyman. They often quarrelled; Harry went continually behindhand; and at length was obliged to sell his types and return to country-work in Pennsylvania."

Thus ended the career of another young man, whose means and opportunity for the achievement of success in business and a respectable standing in society, were so ample, but were forfeited by his follies and his vices.

These events left in Philadelphia only two printing-offices, Bradford's and Franklin's. But Bradford was in very easy circumstances; he employed only a few roving journeymen; did but little business, and made no effort to increase it. Still, as he was the postmaster of the city, it was taken for granted that his means both of obtaining news and circulating advertisements, must be the best; and this idea gave him some advantage over his competitor, especially as he had ordered his post-riders not to carry any of that competitor's papers. This unneighborly conduct of Bradford gave Franklin great disgust; and he considered it so unfair and mean-spirited, that afterward, during the long period for which he had the management of the same postoffice, he never copied so unworthy an example.

Franklin's printing-office was on the second floor of his own house, and under it, on the first floor, was his stationer's shop, one side of which, the apartment being pretty large, was occupied as a glazier's shop, by Thomas Godfrey, who, with his family, lived in the same house, and with whom Franklin still continued to board. The intimacy which grew out of these circumstances led Mrs. Godfrey to plan a match between Franklin and one of her young relatives. For this purpose she made opportunities to bring them frequently together, and the

consequence was, that Franklin soon commenced courtship in earnest; especially as the young woman, according to his own testimony, was "very deserving." Her parents, also, favored the courtship by "continual invitations to supper," and leaving the young people to each other's society.

When, in due time, it became proper that all the parties concerned should come to a definite understanding on this subject, Mrs. Godfrey was employed as the negotiator. Through her Franklin gave the parents distinctly to understand that if he married their daughter, he must receive with her a sum sufficient to pay off the remnant of debt, estimated by him at a hundred pounds, which he still owed for his establishment. To this message they sent back for answer that they had no such amount of money to spare; upon which Franklin suggested that they might mortgage their house and lot to the loan-office.

On receiving this suggestion, the parents took some days to consider the expediency of the match, in a more business-like way; they made inquiries of Bradford respecting the profits and general character, safety and prospects of the printer's trade; and when they had obtained all the information they deemed necessary on these points, they replied that printing, as they were told, was not a productive trade; that its materials were not only expensive, but necessarily subject to great wear and tear, and that fresh supplies were, therefore, needed at short intervals; that two printers, Keimer and Harry, had recently become bankrupt in the business, and that Franklin was himself likely soon to make the third. The result was, that they forbid Franklin's visits to their house, and shut up their daughter.

On this final reply from the parents Franklin makes the following comment: "Whether this was," says he,

"a real change of sentiment, or only an artifice, on the supposition of our being too far engaged in affection to retract, and that therefore we should steal a marriage, which would leave them at liberty to give or withhold what they pleased, I know not. But I suspected the motive, resented it, and went no more."

The conduct of the parents, as presented in the foregoing statement to the mind of an uninterested reader, even at this distance of time, certainly affords some reason for Franklin's suspicion; and that reason was strengthened, in his opinion, at least, by the account, which Mrs. Godfrey subsequently gave him, of the return of the parents to more friendly views, upon the strength of which she urged him to renew his visits to the young woman. He, however, avowed his fixed determination to have no further intercourse with those people. This gave such offence to the Godfreys, that they quit Franklin's house, leaving it wholly to himself; and he thereupon "resolved to take no more inmates."

Though Mrs. Godfrey's attempt at match-making failed of its particular object, yet it served to turn Franklin's thoughts to the subject of marriage; and led him to seek acquaintance with other families. It was not long, however, before this kind of intercourse disclosed to him a very prevalent impression unfavorable to his trade, as a means of accumulating property and giving a family a respectable position in society; and that he "was not to expect money with a wife," unless it should be found requisite by way of compensation for lack of other attractions. But, situated as he was, the temptations to irregular habits, and to pernicious as well as costly pleasures, were numerous and strong; and he felt his danger.

The most neighborly intercourse had been maintained between himself and the family of the Reads, whose at-

tachment to him had suffered no abatement, notwithstanding the circumstances which had prevented his union with the daughter. He stood, in fact, on the most intimate footing with them. They were fond of his society, cherished his friendship, frequently conferred with him in the most confidential manner concerning their affairs, and he was gratified whenever he could render them a service.

Miss Read's position, meanwhile, was a very annoying one. Though her marriage with the worthless Rogers, was believed void, on the ground that he had, as was confidently alleged, another wife living at the time in England, yet the impediments in the way of finding out the woman and procuring proof of the fact, in consequence of the distance and the tardiness of communication between the two countries, made it exceedingly difficult to show the invalidity of that marriage judicially; and though it was reported that Rogers himself had died within a few years after he absconded from Philadelphia, yet that also needed proof, or at least such a lapse of time without knowledge of him, as would raise a legal presumption of the fact.

These circumstances, connected with the disappointment of her first affection and hope, weighed heavily on the spirits of Miss Read, who lost her native cheerfulness and shunned society; and as Franklin reflected on what he saw, he could not escape some feeling of self-reproach for his own conduct, as having indirectly contributed, in some degree at least, to embitter and sadden the condition of one, for whom he cherished the sincerest esteem. On this subject he makes the following frank and honest confession:—

"I considered my giddiness and inconstancy when in London," says he, "as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness; though her mother was good enough to think the fault more her own than mine; as she had

prevented our marrying before I went thither, and had persuaded the other match in my absence."

The two young people, however, meeting, as they did almost daily, in the intimate and confidential intercourse already described, soon felt their affection for each other reviving; and none the less readily and warmly, for the dejection and sadness of the one, and the commiserating sympathy of the other. Indeed, no state of feeling in the two parties respectively, could be imagined more certain to revive a former love, or kindle a new one; and as the allegations respecting the former marriage and the death of Rogers, received the general credence, they determined at length to marry. The marriage took place on the 1st of September, 1730. Nothing connected with the former marriage ever occurred, to disturb the tranquillity of this union; and Franklin closes his relation of this interesting and fortunate transaction, by testifying, as a tribute to the worth of his bride, that "she proved to be a good and faithful help-mate, and assisted him much by attending to the shop;" that they "throve together, and ever mutually endeavored to make each other happy;" finally adding, in reference to his inconstancy to her, while he was in London: "Thus I corrected that great *erratum* as well as I could."

While events so interesting to him, in his private relations, were thus taking place, Franklin did not neglect to avail himself of such means of improvement in knowledge and mental discipline as he could command, and business allowed him opportunity to make use of. He continued to be an active and efficient member of the Junto; and as the meetings of that club had been transferred from the tavern, where they were at first held, to a room liberally furnished for the purpose by Robert Grace, the greater privacy and security of this arrangement led Franklin to propose that, inasmuch as they had

frequent occasion, in their discussions, to refer to the books they respectively possessed, they should make common stock of them by depositing them in the club-room.

This proposal was adopted. On bringing their several parcels together, however, the collection was found considerably less than had been anticipated; and the injury which befell the books for the want of proper care, the readiness with which the members of a small club could borrow of each other, and the advantages, in their circumstances and for their purposes, of having such books as they severally possessed always at hand, overbalanced the benefits of so small a collection, and induced them, at the end of a twelvemonth or thereabouts, to break up the deposite.

This experiment, nevertheless, showed that such collections might be rendered eminently useful, if made on a suitable scale and placed under judicious regulations. A library of sufficient extent to make it worth while to provide for the proper custody and care of the books, would not only be exceedingly useful to persons already addicted to reading, or engaged in investigations, which could not be prosecuted with satisfaction, or success, without the aid of many books; but it might also be rendered still more generally beneficial to society, by placing the means of knowledge within convenient reach even of persons in the narrowest circumstances; and by exciting a love of reading, where it did not already exist, especially among the younger members of the community, who might be thus led to substitute the gratification and benefit to be derived from books, in place of idle, unprofitable, and pernicious amusements.

Considerations of this kind took strong hold of Franklin's mind; and their influence was much augmented by observing the destitution of the community about him,

in relation to this matter. When he established himself in Philadelphia, there was not, as he states, "a good bookseller's shop anywhere in the colonies south of Boston. The printers in New York and Philadelphia were indeed stationers, but they sold only paper, almanacs, ballads, and a few common school-books. Those who loved reading were obliged to send for their books to England."

In this dearth of the means of knowledge, Franklin set about laying the foundation of a library, on the basis of a general subscription. For this purpose he drew up a plan, with provisions for such a management of the proposed library, as he thought would diffuse its benefits most widely, while it also insured a proper care of the books; and then procured Charles Brockden, "a skilful conveyancer," to connect therewith the terms of subscription in such legal form as would constitute a valid contract. Forty shillings were to be paid down by each subscriber, to make the first purchases; and ten shillings yearly thereafter, for the annual increase of the library. Moderate as these terms were, however, "so few," says Franklin, "were the readers at that time in Philadelphia," and most of them "so poor," that he "was not able, with great industry, to find more than fifty" subscribers, in the outset, and they were "mostly young tradesmen."

The fifty subscriptions of forty shillings amounted to one hundred pounds, to be paid, of course, in the local currency. The value of the currency as compared with silver coin is not stated. At the rate of eight shillings to the dollar, (the ultimate rate in New York,) the hundred pounds would be only two hundred and fifty dollars; but as the Pennsylvania currency did not finally fall below the rate of seven shillings and sixpence, and was, at the time now spoken of, much nearer *par*, the

amount in dollars was somewhat more than the number mentioned. "With this little fund," says Franklin, "we began. The books were imported; the library was opened one day in the week for lending them to subscribers, on their promissory notes to pay double the value, if not duly returned. The institution soon manifested its utility, was imitated in other towns, and in other provinces. The libraries were augmented by donations; reading became fashionable; and our people, having no public amusements to divert their attention, became better acquainted with books, and in a few years were observed by strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than people of the same rank generally in other countries."

The articles of subscription, dated on the 1st of July, 1731, bound the signers and their legal representatives for the term of fifty years; but in 1742 they were superseded by a charter from the proprietaries of the province, converting the library association into a permanent corporation, with Franklin at its head.

The library thus founded now contains one of the most extensive and valuable collections of books in this country; and its principal founder had the satisfaction, in 1789, fifty-eight years after its origin, and about eight months before his death, to see the foundation laid of the spacious edifice, designed expressly for it, which it still occupies. At the southeast angle of this edifice, on a stone prepared for the purpose at the suggestion of Franklin, is an inscription, written by him, (except the words relating to himself, inserted by another hand,) and purporting, beside the dates, to be "in honor of the Philadelphia youth, then chiefly artificers," who "cheerfully, at the instance of Benjamin Franklin, one of their number, instituted the Philadelphia Library." The front of the building is adorned with a statue of Frank-

lin in marble, executed in Italy, at the expense of William Bingham, an opulent citizen of Philadelphia.

Before leaving this subject it would be wrong to omit recording here a lesson, which Franklin learned while engaged in recommending the library project, and in soliciting subscriptions for it. The lesson, though it is one of no little practical value, in relation both to self-discipline and to the successful persuasion of others, is also one, which the self-esteem of most of us renders it by no means easy to practise. Franklin has left this lesson behind him in the following passage :—

"The objections and reluctances I met with," says he, "in soliciting subscriptions, made me soon feel the impropriety of presenting *one's self* as the *proposer* of any useful project, which might be supposed to raise one's reputation, in the smallest degree, above that of one's neighbors, when one has need of their assistance to accomplish that project. I therefore put myself, as much as I could, out of sight, and stated it as a scheme of a number of friends, who had requested me to go about and propose it to such as they thought lovers of reading. In this way my affair went on more smoothly, and I ever after practised it on such occasions; and from my frequent successes can heartily recommend it. The present little sacrifice of your vanity will afterward be amply repaid. If it remains awhile uncertain to whom the merit belongs, some one more vain than yourself may be encouraged to claim it, and *then* even envy will be disposed to do you justice, by plucking those assumed feathers and restoring them to their right owner."

This, assuredly, is one of the modes, in which a man may lawfully apply the injunction to "be wise as the serpent, and harmless as the dove."

The new library being opened, no one made more faithful use of it than Franklin. To avail himself most

successfully of its advantages he systematically devoted a portion of every day to study, and eagerly strove to supply, as fully as he could, his deficiencies in those higher parts of learning, to which the "bookish inclination" of his boyhood seemed then to entitle him, but which the scantiness of his father's means constrained him in his youth to forego. He squandered none even of the fragments of his time, in taverns, or other resorts of the frivolous and idle. His personal attendance upon his business gave him all the bodily exercise needful to health; and his studies, to which he went with a relish rendered all the keener by the labors of the day, became his highest and most coveted enjoyment.

Besides the vigilance and industry constantly demanded to protect and extend his business, in the midst of a jealous competition, and to enable him to meet the payments yet due for his establishment, he now had a family for which it was his duty to provide not merely subsistence, but instruction, an honest training, and a respectable position in society. These considerations, however, never depressed his spirits, or operated as discouragements. On the contrary, so far from enfeebling him, they only acted as invigorating incitements to his manly and hopeful nature; and as he found his means steadily increasing, and saw the confidence and esteem of the community toward him daily extending, the consciousness of successful effort and justly appreciated character, must have rendered this period one of the very happiest of his life.

In his own account of this period, Franklin remarks that his father had frequently repeated to him, when a boy, the saying of Solomon — "Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings" — and that this had led him to consider industry as a means of gaining wealth and distinction. This gave him courage;

and though he had, at the time, no anticipation of the literal verification of the proverb in his own case, yet he did, in fact, verify it as fully, probably, as any person that ever lived, of an equally humble origin; for in the course of his long career he stood before *five* kings, with one of whom, the king of Denmark, he sat at dinner, while that monarch was on a visit at Paris, during Franklin's residence there as the diplomatic representative of his country — a greater sovereignty than Denmark.

Time soon showed Franklin how great a boon was his wife, and how material was her co-operation, in securing prosperity. Quoting the old proverb — "He that would thrive must ask his wife" — he congratulates himself on having "one as much disposed to industry and frugality," as he was; and in his business, which, more than most other occupations, furnishes employment well suited to females, "she cheerfully assisted in folding and stitching pamphlets, in tending shop," and in all the various indoor details of their trade.

Their household affairs, also, were placed on a rational and economical footing, suited to their means, and managed with careful frugality, yet without foregoing a single real comfort. "We kept," says Franklin, "no idle servants; our table was plain and simple; and our furniture of the cheapest." His own breakfast long consisted merely of "bread and milk, (no tea,) taken from a two-penny earthen porringer, with a pewter spoon." But, as he smilingly adds, "mark how luxury *will* enter families, and make progress in spite of principle;" for, going one morning to his favorite breakfast, he unexpectedly "found it in a China bowl with a spoon of silver!" His wife, it appears, had prepared this amiable surprise for him, at her own cost, as a token of her affection; and he playfully remarks that "she had no other excuse, or apology, to make, but that she thought *her* husband de-

served a silver spoon and a China bowl, as well as any of his neighbors." These were the first articles of plate and China in the family, and they gradually accumulated to the amount finally of several hundred pounds.

This is a pleasing picture, not merely of frugality and thrift, but of cheerful diligence and domestic concord; and if oftener copied in these days of greater seeming affluence, would secure to many an ambitious young household, the respect, confidence, success, and happiness, they so eagerly desire, but so frequently miss. And the frugality which Franklin practised, as well as taught, was not the mean parsimony of a niggard disposition. This has been sometimes imputed to him; but such an imputation does him the grossest injustice. Not to insist on the readiness with which he put his hand into pocket for casual alms, or even the extent to which, more generous than discreet, he supplied the unworthy necessities of Collins and Ralph, even to his own inconvenience, when he had nothing but the earnings of his daily labor to bestow, and when the prospect of repayment was far too hopeless to influence him in any degree — to say nothing of these instances, the ungrudging liberality with which he provided for his family, as his means accumulated; his bounty, through life, to his poorer relatives; and the uncalculating and patriotic promptitude, with which he aided the public service with his credit and money both, should for ever silence all imputations of the kind mentioned.

No: Franklin's frugality proceeded from a high sense of duty. It was the legitimate fruit and conclusive proof of his honesty, and of a just sentiment of self-respect and manly independence. Twenty-five years old, not yet free of debt, and with a family to provide for, he was pursuing an occupation which was not capable of producing large results in short periods, or by fortu-

nate adventures, but yielded its gains only by small degrees, to steady diligence and patient perseverance; and in which, while two persons failed before his eyes, he still had competitors, and could not safely count upon employment more than enough, at best, for a very moderate and slow accumulation beyond the current expenses of a decent livelihood.

Frugality, and even parsimony, when practised for such reasons, should always be held in honor; and that such were the true motives of Franklin's frugality, is fully confirmed by some rules, which, about this time, he drew up for his guidance. Among these rules, some of which bound him to the strictest veracity and sincerity on all occasions, and others to the habitual avoidance of all censorious and uncharitable speech concerning other people, there are two which bear directly on the point under consideration. In one of these, he states the necessity of his being "extremely frugal" till his debt was paid; and the other testifies to his good sense by resolving to attend closely to whatever he might undertake, and not permit his mind to be "diverted from his business, by any *foolish* project of growing *suddenly rich*;" inasmuch as "industry and patience are the *surest* means of plenty."

In connection with this view of Franklin's domestic condition, at the commencement of house-keeping, as at the opening of a new act in the drama of life, he has left in his autobiography a characteristically frank and honest account of his religious and moral sentiments and habits; and as it is somewhat more explicit, as well as less eccentric in some respects, than the view presented in the paper entitled, "Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion," already noticed, the substance of this account is here given.

His parents were Calvinists, and while he remained

with them, he was trained accordingly. Some of their tenets, however, seemed to him unintelligible, or doubtful; but certain doctrines, or principles, which form the basis, in part at least, of every religous creed, he held with an unfeigned faith. "I never doubted," says he, "the existence of a Deity; that he made the world and governed it by his providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crimes will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here, or hereafter."

Deeming these, as he says, the essentials of every religion, and finding them in all the creeds of the country, he respected them all, though in different degrees, according to the admixture of other doctrines having no tendency, as he thought, to nourish a sound morality, but serving rather to promote division and embitter controversy. These sentiments, joined to a belief, moreover, that even such religious views as seemed to him most mingled with error, were far more wholesome in their practical influence, than no acknowledgment of religious obligation in any form, led him to abstain from everything calculated to impair the confidence of any person in the value of his religious opinions, or to blunt his religious sensibility; and as the growing population of the province called for a greater number of houses for public worship, he never refused his contribution to the subscriptions by which they were usually erected.

He considered public worship and the regular preaching of a settled ministry capable of being rendered eminently useful to society; but he thought their usefulness, in point of fact, greatly diminished by the generally sectarian and polemical character of the preaching; and though he regularly paid a liberal yearly subscription to the support of the only Presbyterian clergyman then in Philadelphia, yet he did not often attend his

meetings, for the reason just mentioned. On this account the clergyman, with whom he lived on terms of uninterrupted good neighborhood, occasionally remonstrated with him; and after one of these friendly admonitions Franklin was induced to attend public worship five Sundays in succession. But the sermons he heard were so exclusively occupied with controversy about points of dispute between different sects; and fell so far short, as it seemed to Franklin, of making that varied and beneficent use of the Scriptures, for which, as he thought, they were designed, and of which they are so capable, for the guidance of life and the elevation of character, that, finding himself not edified, he ceased further attendance upon the preaching of this clergyman, and resorted again to his private devotions, in the form he had some years before prepared for himself, as already related. His own account of this matter he closes with the following frank declaration: "My conduct," says he, "might be blameable; but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it; my present purpose being to relate facts, not to make apologies for them."

Another remarkable event in Franklin's mental history occurred at this stage in the progress of his opinions, and of his inner life. This was the conception of a plan for attaining *moral perfection*. The desire took possession of him "to live without committing any fault at any time;" and by rigorous and vigilant self-discipline, to hold in check and finally overcome all the tendencies and incitements to moral transgression, "either in natural inclination, or custom, or company." Supposing himself to understand clearly the distinctions of right and wrong, in all cases presented to his moral judgment, or conscience, it seemed to him practicable to do right in one case as certainly as in another;

in other words, to follow his convictions of duty, and do right, or avoid wrong, in all cases.

Although Franklin had, beyond doubt, given far more time and earnest thought, than is usual with either the young or the mature, to the momentous duty of self-examination, yet such conceptions and desires as have just been mentioned, while they betoken high endowments, noble aspirations, and the upward bent of his moral nature, show also, we think, not only the inexperience, but the over-confidence of a young man, and a self-knowledge, or perhaps more correctly, a knowledge of human nature, still very partial and imperfect. And this he soon had occasion to perceive, as he does himself very candidly confess.

"I soon found," says he, "that I had undertaken a task of far more difficulty than I had imagined. While my attention was taken up and my care employed in guarding against *one* fault, I was often surprised by *another;* habit took advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our *interest* to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary *habits* must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady and uniform rectitude of conduct."

Perseverance, however, and a strong tenacity of purpose, were among the most marked traits of his character; and instead of abandoning, in weak caprice, his idea of moral perfection, he determined to persist in the endeavor to realize at least some portion of what he might not be able fully to accomplish. For this purpose he drew up a schedule of the moral virtues, so digested and arranged as to include under each as a general head, such ideas as are clear and practical, and such

points of conduct as are unquestionably binding on the conscience; avoiding all fanciful views of moral obligation drawn from fine-spun theories, and placing his system of positive duties on the broad and solid ground of common sense.

His schedule arranged the moral virtues under thirteen titles, or heads, with a brief precept annexed to each, to assist his mind more promptly to recognise the general nature of the particular virtue, and the leading points of conduct embraced within its scope. This schedule was as follows:—

I. TEMPERANCE.— Eat not to dulness; drink not to elevation.

2. SILENCE.— Speak not but what may benefit others, or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. ORDER.— Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. RESOLUTION.— Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. FRUGALITY.— Make no expense but to do good to others, or yourself; that is, waste nothing.

6. INDUSTRY.— Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY.— Use no hurtful deceit; *think* innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE.— Wrong none by *doing injuries*, or *omitting* the *benefits* that are your duty.

9. MODERATION.— Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. CLEANLINESS.—Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11. TRANQUILLITY.— Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents, common or unavoidable.

12. CHASTITY.

13. HUMILITY.— Imitate Jesus, and Socrates.

His process for accomplishing this plan, was to undertake, in the outset, one virtue at a time, leaving the others meanwhile to his ordinary observance of them; and to take them up, also, in the order in which the acquirement of one, would most facilitate the acquisition of another. On this principle he arranged his list. He placed temperance first, because, although a remarkably temperate man, in the common acceptation of the term, he would cultivate that virtue in its largest and worthiest sense, and because, by giving him the fullest and most constant command of all his faculties, it would better prepare him for continual watchfulness against temptation and the force of bad habits, and for the cultivation of other virtues. Silence was fitly placed next, not only because the control of the tongue is more readily attained, when temperance in all things has become habitual, but because, also, in our intercourse with others, knowledge is to be gained by listening, rather than by talking. And thus he proceeded through the entire list, the arrangement of which, does great credit to his philosophical discrimination, and his apprehension of moral relations.

To enable himself the better to pursue this plan of improvement, he framed a moral account book, in which he opened an account with the several virtues on his list. Each page was ruled with seven columns, and at the head of each column was placed the name of a day. These were crossed with thirteen lines, and at the left end of each was entered the name of one of the thirteen virtues, in the order of the list. The pages thus ruled were also thirteen in number, and at the head of each page was written the name of the virtue, which was to be the object of special attention for any one week. On each virtue-line, and in the day-column, was to be a mark for every infraction of that virtue, during that day.

When the virtue placed at the head of the page as the particular object of the week, showed a clean line at the end of the week, then he was to pass on to the special account with the virtue at the head of the next page. Thus a full course with all the virtues on the list, would run through thirteen weeks, making room for four such courses in a year.

To this moral account-book he prefixed three mottoes, or inscriptions, in praise of virtue; and as they serve to reflect, at least a ray of light on the range of study, which this never-idle and much-thinking young tradesman had been quietly yet earnestly pursuing, we copy them. The first one was taken from the celebrated soliloquy of Addison's Cato.

> "Here will I hold. If there's a Power above us —
> And that there *is*, all Nature cries aloud
> Through all her works — He must delight in virtue,
> And that which He delights in, must be happy."

The next was from Cicero's admirable work entitled, "De Officiis"— that is, a treatise on the Moral Duties.

"O, vitæ philosophiæ dux! O, virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex preceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus." *

The third inscription was from the proverbs of Solomon, where he personifies virtue, or righteousness, under the name of Wisdom.

"Length of days is in her right-hand, and in her left-hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

And furthermore, to use his own words, "conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom," he "thought it right

* As many of the readers for whom this book is more particularly prepared, do not read Latin, this motto may be expressed in English thus: "O, philosophy, guide of life, tracer of virtue and expeller of vice! A single day, well spent in obedience to thy precepts, is better than a sinful immortality."

and necessary to solicit His assistance for obtaining it." He, therefore, prefixed to these tables of self-examination a short prayer, composed by himself, for daily use. In this he addresses God as a bountiful and good father, and a merciful guide, asking of him wisdom and strength of spirit to discern and perform his duties; and that his kind offices to his fellow-creatures might be accepted as some return for the favors extended to himself.

In this course of self-discipline he persevered for a long time with scrupulous exactness; and though he ingenuously confesses that he felt surprised at the number of his faults, yet he declares that he was in some degree recompensed by seeing them gradually become less frequent. For the first few years the four cycles of thirteen weeks each, were duly accomplished within the year, in strict accordance with the plan. After a while, however, a single course occupied a whole year; and finally, his accumulating private affairs, and still more his employments in the public service, sending him to and fro, by land and sea, compelled him wholly to relinquish this particular form of self-discipline; though he always kept his account-book with him.

Of all the virtues in his list, Order, and especially that rule of order, which requires a place for everything and everything in its place, gave him, he says, the most trouble. This arose partly from his becoming more and more subject to the varying convenience of others, in the transactions of his growing business; but still more from not having been trained to such habits when young. Being blessed with a tenacious memory, he did not become fully aware of the value of habitual order in the details of all occupations, until advancing age began to diminish the readiness and precision of his recollection.

The difficulty in question annoyed him so much, that he was sometimes tempted to renounce his resolution of

amendment, in order to get rid of the struggle and rescue his self-esteem from mortification at being no better able to control his habits in this particular direction. To exemplify his feelings, in regard to this matter, he relates an anecdote to the following effect.

A man having bought an axe of a blacksmith, wished him to make the whole surface of the axe as bright as the bit. This the smith was ready to do, if the man would turn the grindstone by which alone his wish could be gratified. The man began to turn, and the smith to grind, pressing the broad face of the axe, with all the force of his strong arms, against the biting stone. The man pretty soon beginning to feel a lively curiosity to see, from time to time, how the brightening proceeded, kept quitting the crank to look at the axe, and at length concluded to take it as it was. "No, no," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have the whole axe bright by-and-by; as yet it is only speckled." "Yes," said the man, "but I *think I like a speckled axe best.*"

And so — as the anecdote is applied — so it is with many a person, who undertakes to reform his habits and burnish his character. Surprised at the difficulty of the task, he soon gives it up, concluding that "a speckled axe is best;" and in a vein of pithy irony, Franklin shows, from his own experience, how ready self-indulgence is to find excuses, by remarking that "something that pretended to be reason, kept suggesting that extreme nicety might be a kind of foppery in morals, and provoke ridicule; that a perfect character might incur the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow some faults in himself, to keep his neighbors in countenance."

But still, though Franklin found himself unable to reach that high point of Order, which he had been so ambitious to attain, yet, as he avers, his endeavors in

that direction, contributed to render him a better and happier man, than he would have been, had he not made those endeavors. To his own account of his efforts at self-improvement, and of the somewhat artificial plan upon which he pursued his object, he has annexed the following impressive remarks :—

"It may be well," says he, "that my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder, is in the hand of Providence; but if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoyed, ought to help him bear them with resignation. To *Temperance* he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to *Industry* and *Frugality*, the early easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to *Sincerity* and *Justice*, the confidence of his country and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and cheerfulness in conversation, which make his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his young acquaintance. I hope that some of my descendants may follow the example, and reap the benefit."

It was Franklin's original design to extend the little tabular book described, by adding a commentary on each of the virtues in the list, more fully to explain its positive advantages, as well as the certain disadvantages of the correlative vices; and thus to furnish, for the use of others, especially the young, a manual, which, inasmuch as it was to point out the practical methods of

forming habits of virtue, and not be simply preceptive, or speculative, was to be entitled "The Art of Virtue." With this purpose in view he collected a considerable mass of materials in the form of hints and remarks, made from time to time, in the course of his reading and observation; but the increase of business, and his accumulating engagements in the most important public affairs, prevented the execution of the intended commentary.

The contemplated manual was, moreover, connected, in Franklin's mind, with another and far more comprehensive plan he had conceived for carrying into wider effect his views of moral culture, through the instrumentality of an association, to be regularly organized and to act on society at large. But as this chapter has already exceeded the usual limit, we must defer to the next, the account, which it is deemed necessary to give of what he styles the "great and extensive project" referred to.

CHAPTER XVII.

PROJECT FOR PROMOTING VIRTUE—ALMANAC OF RICHARD SAUNDERS.

From what has already been said it is plain that Franklin's mind, at this period of his life, had become deeply impressed with the duty and advantage of self-discipline; of directing his thoughts and efforts to worthy ends; and of training his faculties, both intellectual and moral, to the attainment of those ends by just and beneficent means; such means as should reconcile and harmonize his own interests with the interests of his fellow-men, and present a genuine exemplification of the doctrine that "*true self* love and *social*, are the same;" or, as the same doctrine had long before been announced, on the very highest authority, in the golden rule requiring every one of us to "do unto others as we would have others to do unto us." He believed this to be the only way to secure any real happiness, and that no qualities are so likely to advance a poor man's fortune in the world, as veracity and integrity.

That he strove, with unfeigned earnestness, to correct his faults and train himself to the habitual practice of virtue, is evident, not only from the general tenor of his life and the personal respect in which he was held, but is particularly and beautifully evinced by his candor and docility in receiving admonition, of which the following anecdote presents a good example. His list of virtues, as he relates, contained at first but twelve. A Quaker

friend of his frankly told him one day, that he was generally considered proud, and in conversation sometimes overbearing and insolent, several instances of which were called to Franklin's remembrance. He acknowledged the justice of the admonition, and added *Humility* to the list of virtues, to be particularly cultivated. He confesses that unremitting watchfulness was at first necessary, to break the offending habit, especially when engaged in animated discussion; yet perseverance was at length crowned with success; and then he found "the advantage of this change in his manners." It not only made intercourse at all times more agreeable, but it procured "a readier reception of his opinions, when right, and less mortification, when wrong."

There is, indeed, no one point in manners and general deportment, which he has so frequently urged, as the language and tone of unassuming deference, in conversation, and in reasoning with others for the purpose of changing their opinions, or procuring their co-operation. To this deferential manner, connected with the prevalent confidence in his integrity, he expressly ascribes his influence with his fellow-citizens, and in deliberative assemblies; for he was, as he declares, but a "bad speaker, hesitating in his choice of words, and never eloquent;" and yet he "generally carried his point."

The good sense of these remarks is obvious; but his modesty, nevertheless, has suppressed one reason quite as efficient as any, in procuring him influence, and a ready adoption of his views; and that reason was to be found in the sound judgment and sagacious forethought by which his views were usually distinguished.

But Franklin's desires, on the great subject of moral improvement, were not limited to his own personal benefit and that of the individuals immediately connected with him, or of the single community in which his lot

was cast. He felt an honest zeal to see the spread of such improvement in all communities, until its purifying and elevating influences should be everywhere manifest; and he believed that much might be done toward the actual attainment of so great an end, by a thorough and persevering application of the principle of voluntary co-operation, in the form of an association organized on the basis of a few comprehensive elementary truths, in which all soberminded and earnest men could agree, and which could be everywhere received for the regulation of social action as well as individual conduct.

The organization of such an association was the "great and extensive project" already alluded to. The original conception of this scheme is traced to a paper containing some observations, suggested to his mind by his historical reading, and dated at the library, May 9th, 1731. These observations were stated in the form of general inferences, and their purport was, that the affairs of all nations, including wars and revolutions, were conducted by parties, acting for their own supposed interests, and that all confusion in those affairs resulted from the opposing views of such parties; that under cover of their general objects, individual members were aiming at their own particular interests, and that when a party collectively had attained its ends, it was soon broken into factions by the clashing of those personal interests; that only a few public men have acted with a single eye to the public good, and that when their acts have, in fact, promoted that end, it has generally been because that good has happened to harmonize with their own personal objects, not because their motives were disinterested and benevolent; that still fewer public men have acted with distinct views to the common welfare of mankind; and that, as a general conclusion from the whole of these

premises, there was need of an organized party for the promotion of virtue, to be formed of the good men of all nations, and governed by suitable rules, which such men would be likely to obey more uniformly than the mass of men obey the laws of the land. To these observations he subjoined a declaration of his belief, that if such a plan should be attempted, in the right spirit, by a properly-qualified person, it would prove acceptable to God, and be crowned with success.

Such were some of the ideas and convictions, which this self-educated tradesman had, at the age of twenty-five years, drawn from history. They indicate a thoughtful and earnest mind, much insight into the ways and motives of men, and those generous aspirations for the moral advancement of the race, which betoken a benevolent and fervent spirit.

It should be remarked that when this project first presented itself to his mind, he did not purpose to enter at once upon the attempt to execute it. He was not then in a condition to do so; but he meditated on it as a work to be attempted when his circumstances should give him the requisite leisure; making notes, meanwhile, of such thoughts as occurred to him from time to time, in relation to it, and to the mode of putting it into operation. During his long residence abroad, those notes, made on detached pieces of paper, got scattered; and when, after his final return home from Europe, he came to write the account of this period of his life, only one of those pieces could be found. That one contained a memorandum of the general truths which he had supposed might properly serve as a basis of the association, and help to give it unity and cohesion.

The contemplated association, it should be borne in mind, was not to be confined to one community, or a single country, but was to be extended through many,

with the design of ultimately embracing all; at least all those leading nations, whose power and influence, if united, would comprehend and sway the more important social movements of the whole of Christendom, and at last of the whole world. The general basis, therefore, on which the organization was to rest, should include, as he thought, only such truths, as were recognised among the elemental principles of every system of religion, and not repugnant to any. Those truths, or principles, as stated by himself, were the following:—

"That there is one God, who made all things; that he governs the world by his providence; that he ought to be worshipped by adoration, prayer, and thanksgiving; that the most acceptable service to God, is doing good to man; that the soul is immortal; and that God will certainly reward virtue, and punish vice, either here, or hereafter."

As to the incipient proceedings, his idea was that only young and single men should associate, in the outset; that every applicant for membership should, as preparatory to admission, exercise himself in the course of self-discipline already described in "The Art of Virtue," and at his initiation should declare his assent to the general truths above stated; that the association should be kept secret, till it could get well agoing and acquire some solidity, so as to be able to exercise firmly a just discrimination in reference to applicants for admission; but that any member, nevertheless, might disclose the enterprise to such individuals as he should personally know to be men of sense and virtue. It was, also, to be made one of the duties of the associates, to promote the just interests of one another. As to a name, he had selected that of "The Society of the Free and Easy;" his reason for it being, in substance, that, by the virtues to be practised they would be freed from the dominion

of vice, and, especially, kept free from the bondage of debt, and easy in point of property, by their habits of industry and frugality.

Such was this philanthropic project, as nearly as Franklin could recall his first conceptions of it, after the lapse of more than half a century. Though the "narrowness of his circumstances," at the time, and his public labors afterward, rendered any attempt on his part, to arrange the machinery necessary to set the plan at work, impossible, yet he never ceased to regard it as practicable. The "seeming magnitude of the undertaking," as he expressly states, offered to his mind no discouragement; for he held that one man of sound understanding and a persevering temper, aiming at good ends by just means, can work great changes in human affairs, if he will but devote all his powers to some one distinct object.

In relation to the practicability of the plan, however, opinions will probably differ; and yet, before pronouncing against the scheme, on this ground alone, it might well be deemed prudent to pause, in view of what the world, since its entrance upon the present century, has seen accomplished by societies, organized on the same principle of voluntary co-operation, for the morals and manners of great national communities, as well as for other benevolent and religious purposes. Still, though the principle of action in all these cases is the same, there is a difference, which seems to be an important one in its practical bearings, between applying the principle to some one specific and clearly-defined object, as in the Temperance movement, for example, and the application of the same principle to a whole list of virtues and vices, or the entire range of moral action.

We think, moreover, that the very element in this project, to which its projector looked chiefly for its suc-

cess, would have been found to be the chief obstacle to its acceptance. We refer to its neutrality in regard to every specific form of religion. Men generally, we apprehend, are most tenacious of precisely those points in their creeds on which they differ from all others, and for the sake of which alone are they adopted. This we suppose to be true, even among sects of the same general system of faith. But, in the case before us, from the platform of general truths is excluded everything peculiar, not merely to different sects claiming a common origin, but to that entire system of religion which is received, not merely as true, but as inspired, throughout all Christendom; and which, moreover, notwithstanding the many ways in which it has been perverted, experience, to say nothing of diviner sanctions, has shown to be the surest support of a pure and stable morality, and therefore, as we believe, the best and only undeceitful guide to those benign results which the contemplated project purposed to attain. Instead, therefore, of attracting members, or co-operation in any form, from the professors of Christianity, among whom, after all reasonable concessions on the score of unfaithfulness, have been found, in every age, the most earnest, steadfast, and efficient promoters of practical virtue, the neutrality mentioned would, we are persuaded, have constituted their invincible objection to the whole scheme.

Nevertheless, whatever may be the just conclusion upon these points, it will be admitted, we presume, that the reflections out of which this project grew, and the benefits purposed by the projector, give ample evidence, not only of benevolent motives and an honorable zeal for the welfare of society, but of enlightened views of some of the most important lessons taught by the previous experience and actual condition of mankind.

About this time, however, Franklin undertook another

work, unquestionably practical in its whole character, and of unequivocal utility; one which operated with palpable benefit on the general habits of the community, extended his own reputation and influence, and contributed materially to his pecuniary advantage. This was the publication, under the name of Richard Saunders, of the almanac, which afterward became so celebrated and popular as "Poor Richard's Almanac." He issued the first one of the annual series on the 19th of December, 1732, when he was drawing near the end of the twenty-seventh year of his age; and he continued the publication for about twenty-five years: the number of copies for each year, during most of that period, amounting to nearly ten thousand.

The character which he gave to this publication presents conclusive proof of his desire to do good, and of his fidelity to the principles of sound morality and the maxims of an honest life. Passing as it did, year after year, into many thousand families, very many of them being exceedingly limited in their pecuniary means, having few or none of the advantages of education, and engaged in occupations too full of labor to allow more than occasional and scanty opportunity for obtaining information from books, such a publication as Franklin furnished them was undoubedly valuable to them as a vehicle of instruction; and he availed himself of it for that purpose with such benevolent assiduity, so judiciously, and with such marked success, that in the course of four or five weeks after the first issue, it became necessary to print three editions of the very first number. And although, in subsequent years, the first edition for the year was greatly enlarged, yet still further issues became frequently necessary to supply the demand for it.

One of the features of this almanac which rendered it at that day most attractive and useful, was the great num-

ber of maxims of practical, proverbial wisdom, with which its pages were richly stored. "I filled," says he, "all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar, with proverbial sentences; chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, "*It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*"

When about to relinquish the publication of his almanac, he gathered these scattered maxims together, and in order to render them more permanently useful, he wove them into a regular discourse, supposed to have been delivered by an aged man to a company of both sexes at a public auction. This discourse he entitled "The Way to Wealth," and prefixed it to the last number of his almanac, published for the year 1757. It soon appeared in all the colonial newspapers; and on reaching England, it was printed on one large sheet, to be hung against the wall of a room, that "the way to wealth" might always be in sight, and spread all over the British islands. It was, moreover, translated into French twice (in 1773 and 1778) during Franklin's life, and once at least after his death. Of each of these translations several editions were issued, and the clergy and gentry distributed the copies gratuitously in great numbers among the poorer classes. Besides all this, in 1823, when the Greeks had entered into their struggle for national independence, "The Way to Wealth" was published at Paris for distribution among them, with a brief account of the author, in Romaic, or modern Greek.

The performance in question is so celebrated, contains so much of the common sense and practical wisdom of past ages, and its maxims are so well fitted for the daily guidance of common life, that it is transcribed here, in

Father Abraham's Discourse on the hardness of the times

full, as being essential to one of the leading purposes of this book.

THE WAY TO WEALTH,

As clearly shown in the Preface of an old Pennsylvania Almanac, entitled, "Poor Richard Improved."

COURTEOUS READER: I have heard that nothing gives an author so great pleasure as to find his works respectfully quoted by others. Judge, then, how much I must have been gratified by an incident I am going to relate to you. I stopped my horse lately where a great number of people were collected at an auction of merchants' goods. The hour of the sale not being come, they were conversing on the badness of the times; and one of the company called to a plain, clean old man, with white locks—"Pray, Father Abraham, what think *you* of the times? Will not these heavy taxes quite ruin the country? How shall we ever be able to pay them? What would you advise us to?" Father Abraham stood up and replied, "If you would have my advice, I will give it you in short; for *A word to the wise is enough*, as Poor Richard says." They joined in desiring him to speak his mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows:—

"Friends," said he, "the taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our *idleness*, three times as much by our *pride*, and four times as much by our *folly;* and from these taxes the commissioners can not ease or deliver us, by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us; for *God helps them that help themselves*, as Poor Richard says.

"I. It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one tenth of their time, to be employed in its service; but idleness taxes many of us much more; sloth, by bringing on diseases, absolutely shortens life. *Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears; while the used key is always bright,* as Poor Richard says. *But dost thou love life? then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of,* as Poor Richard says. How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep, forgetting that *The sleeping fox catches no poultry,* and that *There will be sleeping enough in the grave,* as Poor Richard says.

"*If time be of all things the most precious, wasting time must be,* as Poor Richard says, *the greatest prodigality;* since, as he elsewhere tells us, *Lost time is never found again; and what we call time enough, always proves little enough.* Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the purpose; so, by diligence, shall we do more with less perplexity. *Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all easy;* and *He that riseth late must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night;* while *Laziness travels so slowly that Poverty soon overtakes him. Drive thy business, let not that drive thee;* and *Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,* as Poor Richard says.

"So, what signifies wishing and hoping for better times? We may make *these* times better, if we bestir ourselves. *Industry need not wish; and he that lives upon hopes will die fasting. There are no gains without pains; Then help, hands, for I have no lands:* or if I have, they are smartly taxed. *He that hath a trade hath an estate;* and *He that hath a calling hath an office of profit and honor,* as Poor Richard says; but then the trade must be worked at, and the calling followed, or neither the estate nor the office will enable us to pay

our taxes. If we are industrious we shall never starve; for *At the working-man's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter.* Nor will the bailiff or the constable enter, for *Industry pays debts, while despair increaseth them.* What though you have found no treasure, nor has any rich relation left you a legacy, *Diligence is the mother of good luck, and God gives all things to industry.* Then *Plough deep while sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell and to keep.* Work while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow. *One to-day is worth two to-morrows,* as Poor Richard says; and further, *Never leave that till to-morrow, which you can do to-day.* If you were a servant, would you not be ashamed that a good master should catch you idle? Are you then your own master? Be ashamed to catch yourself idle, when there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, and your country. Handle your tools without mittens, remembering that *The cat in gloves catches no mice,* as Poor Richard says. It is true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed; but stick to it steadily, and you will see great effects; for *Constant dropping wears away stones;* and *By diligence and patience the mouse ate in two the cable;* and *Little strokes fell great oaks.*

"Methinks I hear some of you say, 'Must a man afford himself no leisure?' I will tell thee, my friend, what Poor Richard says: *Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure;* and *Since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour.* Leisure is time for doing something useful. This leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never; for *A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things. Many, without labor, would live by their wits only, but they break for want of stock;* whereas, industry gives comfort, and plenty, and respect. *Fly pleasures, and they will follow you.*

The diligent spinner has a large shift; and *Now I have a sheep and a cow, everybody bids me good-morrow.*

"II. But with our industry we must likewise be steady, settled, and careful; and oversee our own affairs with our own eyes, and not trust too much to others; for, as Poor Richard says—

I never saw an oft-removéd tree,
Nor yet an oft-removéd family,
That throve so well as those that settled be.

And again, *Three removes are as bad as a fire;* and again, *Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee;* and again, *If you would have your business done, go; if not, send;* and again—

He that by the plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

And again, *The eye of a master will do more work than both his hands;* and again, *Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge;* and again, *Not to oversee workmen, is to leave them your purse open.* Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many; for *In the affairs of* THIS *world men are saved, not by faith, but by the want of it;* but a man's own care is profitable; for, *If you would have a faithful servant, and one that you like, serve yourself. A little neglect may breed great mischief; for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; for want of a horse the rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the enemy; all for want of a little care about a horse-shoe nail.*

"III. So much for industry, my friends, and attention to one's own business. But to these we must add frugality, if we would make our industry more certainly successful. A man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, keep his nose all his life to the grindstone, and

die not worth a groat at last. *A fat kitchen makes a lean will;* and—

> *Many estates are spent in the getting,*
> *Since women for tea, forsook spinning and knitting,*
> *And men for punch, forsook hewing and splitting.*

If you would be wealthy, think of saving as well as of getting. The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her outgoes are greater than her incomes.

"Away, then, with your expensive follies, and you will not then have so much cause to complain of hard times, heavy taxes, and chargeable families; for—

> *Women and wine, game and deceit,*
> *Make the wealth small, and the want great.*

And further— *What maintains one vice, would bring up two children.* You may think, perhaps, that a little tea, or a little punch, now and then, or diet a little more costly, clothes a little finer, and a little entertainment now and then, can be no great matter; but remember, *Many a little makes a mickle.* Beware of *little* expenses. *A small leak will sink a great ship,* as Poor Richard says; and again— *Who dainties love, shall beggars prove;* and, moreover, *Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them.*

"Here you are all got together at this sale of fineries and knick-knacks. You call them *goods;* but if you do not take care, they will prove *evils* to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap; and perhaps they may be, for less than they cost; but, if you have no *occasion* for them, they *must be dear to you.* Remember what Poor Richard says: *Buy what thou hast no need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy necessaries.* And again—*At a great pennyworth pause a while.* He means that perhaps the cheapness is apparent only, and not real; or the bargain, by straitening thee in thy business, may do thee more harm than good. For in another place he says—*Many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths.*

Again — *It is foolish to lay out money in a purchase of repentance;* and yet this folly is practised every day at auctions, for want of minding the Almanac. Many a one, for the sake of finery on the back, has gone with a hungry belly, and half-starved his family. *Silks and satins, scarlet and velvets, put out the kitchen-fire,* as Poor Richard says.

"These are not the necessaries of life; they can scarcely be called the conveniences; and yet, only because they look pretty, how many want to have them! By these and other extravagances, the genteel are reduced to poverty, and forced to borrow of those they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality, have maintained their standing; in which case it appears plainly that *A ploughman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees,* as Poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small estate left them, which they knew not the getting of. They think, *It is day, and will never be night;* that a little to be spent out of so much, is not worth minding; but *Always taking out of the meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom,* as Poor Richard says; and then, *When the well is dry, they know the worth of water.* But this they might have known before, if they had taken his advice. *If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some;* for *He that goes a borrowing, goes a sorrowing,* as Poor Richard says; and indeed so does he, that lends to such people, when he goes to get it again. Poor Richard further advises and says —

Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse;
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse.

And again — *Pride is as loud a beggar as Want, and a great deal more saucy.* When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but Poor Richard says, *It is easier to*

suppress the first desire, than to satisfy all that follow it. And it is as truly a folly for the poor to ape the rich, as for the frog to swell in order to equal the ox.

Vessels large may venture more;
But little boats should keep near shore.

It is, however, a folly soon punished; for, as Poor Richard says, *Pride that dines on vanity, sups on contempt. Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy.* And after all, of what use is this pride of appearance, for which so much is risked and suffered? It can not promote health, nor ease pain; it makes no increase of merit in the person; it creates envy; it hastens misfortune.

"But what *madness* must it be to *run into debt* for these superfluities! We are offered, by the terms of this sale, six months' credit; and that, perhaps, has induced some of us to attend it, because we can not spare the ready money, and hope now to be fine without it. But ah! think what you do, when you run into debt! You give to *another*, power over your own liberty. If you can not pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor; you will be in fear when you speak to him; you will make poor, pitiful, sneaking excuses; and by degrees come to lose your veracity, and sink into base, downright lying; for *The second vice is lying, when the first is running into debt,* as Poor Richard says; and again, to the same purpose, *Lying rides upon Debt's back;* whereas, a freeborn American ought not to be ashamed, nor afraid to see or to speak to any man living. But poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. *It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

"What would you think of that prince, or of that government, that should issue an edict forbidding you to dress like a gentleman, or a gentlewoman, on pain of imprisonment or servitude? Would you not say that

you were free, had a right to dress as you please, and that such an edict would be a breach of your privileges, and such a government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under such a tyranny, when you run into debt for such dress! Your creditor has authority, at his pleasure, to deprive you of your liberty, by confining you in jail till you shall be able to pay him. When you have got your bargain, you may perhaps think little of payment; but, as Poor Richard says, *Creditors have better memories than debtors; creditors are a superstitious sect, great observers of set days and times.* The day comes round before you are aware, and the demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it; or, if you bear your debt in mind, the term, which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extremely short. Time will seem to have added wings to his heels, as well as his shoulders. *Those have a short Lent, who owe money to be paid at Easter.* At present you may perhaps think yourselves in thriving circumstances, and that you can bear a little extravagance without injury; but—

For age and want save while you may;
No morning sun lasts a whole day.

Gain may be temporary and uncertain; but ever, while you live, *expense* is *constant* and *certain;* and *It is easier to build two chimneys than to keep one in fuel,* as Poor Richard says; so, *Rather go to bed supperless, than rise in debt.*

Get what you can, and what you get, hold;
'T is the stone that will turn all your lead into gold.

And, when you have got this *philosopher's stone,* you will surely no longer complain of bad times, or the difficulty of paying taxes.

"IV. This doctrine, my friends, is reason and wisdom; but, after all, do not depend too much upon your own industry, and frugality, and prudence, though excellent

things; for they may all be blasted, without the blessing of Heaven; and, therefore, ask that blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember, Job suffered, and was afterward prosperous.

"And now, to conclude, *Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other*, as Poor Richard says, and scarcely in that; for it is true — *We may give advice, but we can not give conduct.* However, remember this: *They that will not be counselled, can not be helped;* and further, that *If you will not hear Reason, she will surely rap your knuckles*, as Poor Richard says."

Such was the discourse ascribed to the white-haired Abraham; and the author, in the guise of Richard Saunders, adds, with a spice of pungent humor, that "the people heard it, approved the doctrine, and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common sermon; for the auction opened and they began to buy extravagantly."

Still, though the company at the auction could not, in the immediate presence of temptation, be persuaded at once to forego the cheap bargains they had come expressly to make, and for which their mouths were already watering; yet, when the discourse, everywhere distributed among the people, had an opportunity to make its quiet appeal to their good sense, without having to encounter the power of rival vanities in the immediate presence of the objects of competition, it took effect far and wide; insomuch that, "as it discouraged useless expense in foreign superfluities, some thought it had its share of influence, in producing that growing plenty of money, which was observable for several years after its publication."

We have, on a previous page, noticed the censure sometimes passed upon Franklin, as encouraging a too penu-

rious and niggardly spirit, by insisting so much as he did, in this and a number of other pieces, on the practice of industry, frugality, and economy. In the previous remarks alluded to, it was our object to vindicate his own personal habits and motives from the censure mentioned. The discourse before us presents the subject in another aspect, on which a few words will not, we trust, be deemed inappropriate.

The reason assigned by Franklin himself for the earnestness with which he inculcated the maxims of thrift, fully vindicates his motives from the censure in question; for he expressly declares that in so doing, it was his purpose to render virtue more safe by placing it as much as possible out of the power of temptation, and securing that degree of personal independence, and freedom of opinion and action, which are most favorable to the discharge of the various duties of life; while his conduct, from first to last, shows that his own character was wholly free from the taint of covetousness, or sordid parsimony.

It is very likely that the covetous and mean may have used his pithy sayings, not unfrequently, to cover a predetermination to keep their hands fast shut against all appeals of private benevolence, or an enlightened and just public spirit. But to use those maxims thus, is to abuse them; and it still remains true that industry and frugality are virtues; that the maxims which enforce them are wise and useful; and that the man who is able, by such teachings, to extend the practice of those virtues, is both a public and a private benefactor; for notwithstanding the occasional abuse of such precepts, it is constantly true that, for the great majority of our race, the only way to obtain an honest livelihood, or train their children to become useful and wholesome members of society, is the exercise of the virtues mentioned.

Indeed, the far more common danger to which men are exposed, is on the side of indolence, prodigality, improvidence, and the neglect of systematic economy in all affairs, whether public or private; and these same vices withhold from the just calls of benevolence and worthy enterprise, far greater sums than all the hoardings of avarice and parsimony. The money continually lavished for the most frivolous purposes, or the most profligate and pernicious self-indulgence, take Christendom through, would feed and clothe, shelter, educate, and train to virtue, usefulness, and respectability, all the children of want, ignorance, vice, and infamy, on earth, and renovate the world.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEWSPAPERS — HE DEFENDS A CLERGYMAN — LANGUAGES — FAMILY CONCERNS — NEW CLUBS — MADE CLERK OF THE ASSEMBLY — CITY AFFAIRS.

Franklin availed himself of his newspaper, as he did of his almanac, to make it not merely a gazette of news and advertisements, but a vehicle of useful knowledge, and the means of promoting a relish for instructive reading and a just taste. With these views he inserted, from time to time, selections from the best writers in the language, and occasionally an essay of his own, which had been prepared for the Junto. Some of his early performances, which first came before the public in this way, have been justly deemed worthy of preservation in the collections of his writings. One of these pieces, published in 1730, aside from its literary merits, has a further interest as presenting another view of the action of his mind and of his way of thinking, at that period, on important points of morality; and as indicating also something of the influences at work in that club, which contributed so much to exercise and develop his faculties.

The piece referred to is a dialogue, in the Socratic manner, between two friends, "Concerning Virtue and Pleasure;" aiming "to show that a vicious man, whatever may be his abilities, can not be properly called a man of sense." In this performance the author inculcates the wisdom and duty of that comprehensive tem-

perance, or self-control, which is not less indispensable to the lasting enjoyment of even those pleasures of which the senses are the medium, than it is to the discharge of duty, or to the attainment of any kind of real and permanent good. Among other things, he touches upon the grave question of the moral responsibility involved in the formation of opinions; maintaining the doctrine that a man is culpable for wrong opinions of the nature of human actions, so far as he neglects the means within his power to rectify them; and that wrong actions induced by such opinions are not excused by mere good intentions. He holds, also, that a man's truest good is to be found in well-doing, or in "doing all the good he can to others;" that "this is that constant and durable good which will afford contentment and satisfaction always alike;" and is the only species of pleasure that "*grows* by *repetition*," and "ends but with our being."

The moral principles which governed him in the conduct of his newspaper give honorable evidence of rectitude and firmness. He "carefully excluded all libelling and personal abuse;" and when the insertion of such articles was urged on the plea of "the liberty of the press," and that "a newspaper was like a stagecoach, in which any one who would pay, had a right to a place," he replied that "he would not take it upon him to spread detraction; and that, having contracted with his subscribers to furnish them with what might be either useful or entertaining, he could not fill *their* paper with private altercation, in which they had no concern, without doing them great injustice."

Such principles are worthy of all praise; and the observance of them, as Franklin urges from his own ample experience, will be found, in the main, as profitable as it is honest and just.

Franklin, it appears, established the first printing-office

in Charleston, South Carolina. On learning that such an establishment was desired there, he fitted out one of his journeymen with the necessary apparatus, in 1733, under a contract with him to sustain one third of the expenses and receive one third of the profits. The person thus sent is represented as an intelligent man, but neglectful of his accounts; and though he remitted money occasionally, yet never, while he lived, did he furnish a regular and full statement of the affairs of the partnership. Upon his death, however, his widow continued the business; and having been born and bred in Holland, where, as in other parts of Europe, females are taught book-keeping as a customary part of education, she lost no time in looking into the concerns of the printing-office; and not only furnished as clear and exact an exhibit of the past transactions of the office as the books and papers left by her husband permitted, but she "continued to account, with the greatest regularity and exactness, every quarter afterward."

This discreet and usefully-educated woman managed the business so well, as to derive from it the means of bringing up several children, in a very judicious and reputable manner; and at the close of the partnership term, was able to buy out her partner's interest, and place her eldest son at the head of the establishment.

This case is related by Franklin, as he remarks, for the purpose of commending the practice of making a knowledge of account-keeping, sufficient at least for the ordinary transactions of business, a part of the common education of both sexes alike; and as being likely to prove more useful to "our young women and their children, in case of widowhood, than either music or dancing, by preserving them from the imposition of crafty men, and enabling them to continue perhaps a profitable mercantile house, with established correspondents, till a son is grown

up, fit to go on with it, to the lasting advantage and enriching of the family."

About this period a young Presbyterian clergyman took charge of the congregation to which Franklin nominally belonged, who soon became exceedingly popular. In his preaching he chiefly insisted, it appears, on the various duties of life; endeavoring to awaken the consciences of his hearers to the importance of a faithful discharge of those duties, as the best evidence of a true Christian spirit — the good fruit of the good tree; and saying little of doctrinal points, and nothing of sectarian controversy. His discourses, being delivered in a very impressive manner, without notes, and uncommonly well composed, "drew together considerable numbers of different persuasions, who joined in admiring them;" and as they constituted the kind of preaching which Franklin believed most likely to do good, he became a constant and gratified attendant upon them.

At length, however, a charge of heresy was brought against the preacher, and he was arraigned thereon before the synod. This occasioned a warm contest, in which Franklin sided with the accused; and, as he remarks, "finding him, though an elegant preacher, a poor writer, wrote for him two or three pamphlets," besides an article in his paper. This was in the spring of 1735; and so much of a party was enlisted for the young minister, as to raise at first some hope of success. An opponent, however, on hearing one of these much-applauded sermons, was strongly impressed with the conviction that he had already seen much of it elsewhere; and after a little search he found its most striking portions in some extracts, "in one of the British reviews, from a discourse of Dr. Foster;" the same eloquent divine, doubtless, whom Pope, in the Epilogue to his Satires, styles "modest Foster," and celebrates for "preaching well."

This exposure was followed by the sentence of the synod against the young minister, who subsequently confessed to Franklin, that he did not write one of the sermons which had been so much admired; and he stated that his memory was so retentive, that from a single reading of such a discourse, he could repeat the whole of it. Soon after being silenced, he went from Philadelphia; and Franklin, though he paid his annual contribution, for many years, to support the minister of the congregation, ceased all further personal intercourse with it.

Franklin made some valuable acquisitions, at this period, which show how much may be done, in this way, even by a man of business, if he will only adhere, with steady perseverance, to some plan judiciously adapted to the opportunities allowed by his occupation, for the pursuit of collateral objects. In 1733, he began to study the French language; and without the smallest neglect of his business, he soon learned to read it with ease. He then took up Italian; but being very fond of chess, and often playing the game with another person, who was engaged in acquiring the same language, Franklin found his favorite amusement encroaching so much upon his time, that he determined to quit it, unless his companion would agree that the winner, at the close of every game, should require of the loser a task in Italian to be performed at their next meeting. This course was pursued; and, says Franklin, "as we played pretty equally, we thus *beat* each other into that language." He adds that afterward, "with a little pains-taking," he acquired enough Spanish to read that language also.

When a boy he had received, it will be remembered, some instruction in the rudiments of the Latin, but was soon obliged to relinquish it, and had never resumed the study. After acquiring the three modern languages mentioned, "on looking over a Latin Testament," he states

his surprise at finding that he "understood more of that language than he had imagined;" and thereupon applying himself to it again, with his habitual earnestness, he now acquired a very valuable knowledge of the Latin.

His own experience on this point led him to the opinion that the course usually pursued in the study of languages, beginning with the Latin and Greek, and then taking up the modern tongues, is not judicious; that much time would be saved, and more valuable acquisitions made, by reversing the process, and beginning with the living languages, as being most easily acquired; and thus, to use his own figure, ascend the stairs regularly step by step, by beginning with the one most readily attained.

But, besides the more rapid progress, which, as he thought, would thus be made in attaining a series of languages, he suggested that another practical advantage would be secured. If, for any reason, the student should be constrained, in the midst of his career, to relinquish his pursuit, he would still be in possession of one or more of the living languages, which, in a great majority of cases, would prove to be the more useful part of the series.

The question here presented is certainly one of much practical importance. The *order* of study recommended seems to be the natural order. In the pursuit of knowledge we necessarily proceed from what is known, to what is not known; and the same rule, in its spirit, would seem to require that, of things not yet known, the student should begin with that which is most easily acquired, and then proceed to the more difficult; especially when the objects of pursuit are connected by so many affinities as are the languages in question. Various instances, moreover, of experience similar to that of Franklin's in this matter, might be cited in support of his recommendation.

As to the practical value of the ancient and modern languages respectively, the question seems to be one which each individual should decide with exclusive reference to his actual or intended pursuits. For all those who are directly concerned in the various callings of active life, including not only foreign trade, but every kind of intercourse with other nations, in either private or public affairs, the living languages are obviously the most important. So it seems to be, also, in reference to those professional employments, (engineering, for instance,) which depend on the physical sciences and the mathematics auxiliary to them; inasmuch as all the learning, of any practical utility, is contained almost exclusively in the modern languages.

Even in regard to some of the highest forms of literature and art, so far as relates to works most distinguished for original conception and the deepest insight into human life and character, the study of the ancient languages and literature seems to be of little importance; for the most admirable works, of this class, have appeared in times of comparative rudeness, or were produced by men having little instruction of any kind, beyond what they derived from their own observation and experience. But, nevertheless, there are aspects in which the thorough mastery of the classic literature of ancient Greece and Rome seems to be of great moment. As a means of mental discipline, we believe such study to be superior to any other, particularly for training the mind to that nice discrimination, both in thought and expression, without which some of the highest qualities of style are rarely attainable, and to that clear perception and quick sense of whatever is beautiful, which seem indispensable to just and profound criticism, and to that high standard of excellence, and that tone of scholarship, from which alone, as from a presiding spirit, can emanate those re-

fining influences, which seem necessary to insure the highest state of culture, in art or literature.

In 1734, Franklin's industrious and frugal habits having placed him in easy circumstances, he paid a visit to his birthplace and family connexions. He had not been there for about ten years; but death had made but few breaches in the circle of those whom he had best known and loved. Both his parents were yet living. Several of his older brothers and sisters had died young, before he had an opportunity to know them; but of those who reached maturity, and to whom his natural attachments had linked themselves as he grew up, all had thus far been spared, except his older sister Sarah, (Mrs. Davenport,) who died in 1731. His family affections, which were warm, were much gratified by the visit; and on his way back to Philadelphia, he visited his brother James, who had now for some time been settled at Newport, Rhode Island, and was still pursuing his trade as a printer.

This visit was endeared to the two brothers by putting the seal to their mutual reconcilement. Old differences and heart-burnings had all passed away, and they met, as brothers should meet, with cordial affection. The health of James was much undermined, and, in the conviction that his death could not be very distant, he desired his brother, whenever that event should occur, to take his son, then ten years old, and train him as a printer. To this desire Benjamin cheerfully assented; and he fulfilled it with generous fidelity, by taking his nephew, on the death of the lad's father in 1735, into his own family, sending him for a few years to school, and then placing him in his printing-office. The widow of James continued his business at Newport, till her son came to the age of twenty-one years; when, being furnished by his uncle with a full set of new types, he re-

turned to his mother and took the business out of her hands into his own. In this way did Franklin more than redeem his pledge to his deceased brother, and make compensation for not having served out the term of his apprenticeship.

The sorest affliction Franklin had yet suffered, befell him in 1736, in the death of one of his two sons by the small-pox taken in what is called the natural way. "He was a fine boy of four years old," says the father, "and I long regretted him bitterly." He also states his regret that he had not had the child inoculated; and he makes this declaration, as he remarks, as an admonition to those parents, who assign as their reason for omitting to have their children inoculated, that they could never forgive themselves, if a child should die of the disease thus voluntarily communicated; inasmuch as his own experience showed, to use his own words, "that the *regret* may be the same either way; and therefore the *safer* course should be chosen."

The Junto had proved so agreeable and advantageous to its members, that some of them wished to enlarge the club by bringing in their friends. But this would have extended its number beyond twelve, which had been fixed as a limit well fitted for convenience, and for the permanent preservation of harmony. In order, moreover, to avoid annoying applications for admission, the existence as well as nature of the club had been a secret.

Franklin, being unwilling thus to augment the numbers of the existing association, proposed, instead, that each member should start a new club, on the same principles and subject to the same regulations, but without making known his connexion with the parent-club; while he should, at the same time, obey the instructions of the parent-club, in suggesting inquiries and directing the action of the new club, and should also make regular re-

ports of its doings: thus rendering the new clubs subordinate to the parent-Junto, and their founders the channels of communication with them, but without their knowledge of the fact.

In support of his proposal he urged that a much larger number of young men would thus be enabled to enjoy the advantages of such an association; that the members of the parent-club would thus be enabled to obtain much more extended and correct knowledge of the views of all classes of the community, on every important occasion or subject; that they could thus, also, exert a more extensive and efficient influence for the advancement of the public interests, as well as in behalf of their own legitimate private objects; and, finally, that they would thus increase their power and opportunities to be useful.

The proposed plan was assented to; each member of the Junto endeavored to organize a new club; and several of them succeeded. Of the five or six clubs thus formed, the names of three, as given by Franklin, were — *The Vine* — *The Union* — and *The Band;* and he says that they were not only useful to their own members respectively, but that they afforded much information as well as amusement to the Junto, besides enabling it to exert occasionally, and to a considerable extent, that influence on the public mind, which was one of the inducements to establish them.

It was also in the same year, 1736, that Franklin received his first political appointment, in being chosen by the General Assembly of Pennsylvania clerk of that body. On this first occasion he was chosen without opposition. But the members of the Assembly, as well as the clerk, being elected annually, the next year, 1737, a new member, stated to have been a man of fortune, education, and talents, made a long speech against the re-election of Franklin, and in behalf of another candidate for the

clerkship. Franklin, however, was again placed in the office, which was a desirable one, not only for its respectability, but also for its emoluments, and for the influence it gave him with the members; by which means he secured for himself the still more profitable employment of printing the journals of the Assembly, the laws, the paper-money, and such other public printing as occasionally became necessary.

The name of the new member, who so strenuously opposed the re-election of Franklin as clerk of the Assembly, is not stated; but the latter converted him into a friend before the close of the session. The course he took to attain this end furnishes too valuable a lesson and is too characteristic of the man, to be omitted. Franklin, readily perceiving that the person in question was certain to become an influential member of such a body, felt a natural and proper regret to find such a man opposed to him for no just reason, but in all probability from a total misconception of his character, and resolved to win his good will. The manner in which he sought and attained this end, is best stated in his own words :—

"I did not aim at gaining his favor," says Franklin, "by paying any servile respect to him; but, after some time, took this method. Having heard that he had in his library a certain very scarce and curious book, I wrote a note to him, expressing my desire to peruse that book, and requesting that he would do me the favor of lending it to me for a few days. He sent it immediately; and I returned it in about a week, with another note, expressing strongly my sense of the favor. When we next met in the house, he spoke to me, which he had never done before, and with great civility; and he ever after manifested a readiness to serve me on all occasions; so that we became great friends, and our friend ship continued to his death."

Franklin gives this anecdote as a verification of the old maxim, that "He that hath done you *one* kindness, will be more ready to do you *another*, than he to whom you have yourself done a favor;" and "it shows," he adds, "how much more profitable it is, prudently to remove, than to resent, return, and continue, inimical proceedings."

The incidents related, and their results, were certainly honorable to the good sense and liberal feeling of both parties; though Franklin's course, at least, was very different from that which ordinary men would have pursued. If it should be said that the motive, on both sides, was selfish, the remark, even if admitted to be true, would have little force, and no value; for the very sufficient reason that, if such were the motive, it was a far more creditable and enlightened form of self-love than any exhibition of such feelings in the unworthy and debasing manner of vulgar resentment and vindictive hate — emotions which not only belong to the very essence of the most intense and intolerant selfishness, but imply, besides, in a case like the one in question, an arrogant assumption of merit so great, as to render any opposition to its demands equivalent to an invasion of personal rights. But it seems to be a mere abuse of terms to pronounce the conduct described selfish. To our apprehension it evinces unusual magnanimity in both parties; and, in Franklin, a candid allowance for misconception on the part of his opponent, with a manly admission of the right of that opponent to advocate the election of any candidate he liked best. Indeed, his conduct approaches so near that which is enjoined by the Christian precepts, to return good for evil, to do as you would be done by, and to forgive injuries, that any practical distinction seems difficult; and if men would always act with the same good sense and moderation, or even with

equally enlightened self-love, most of the personal feuds that embitter life and disturb its tranquillity would disappear, and the enmities, kindled by hasty resentment, and fostered by the pernicious sentiment of false honor, would be happily exchanged for friendship and peace.

In 1737, the deputy-postmaster at Philadelphia having proved negligent respecting his official accounts, was removed, and Franklin was appointed in his place. This appointment gratified Franklin, not so much for the salary connected with it, which was but small, as because, by relieving his correspondence from all expense, and enabling him to improve his newspaper, its circulation and advertising custom were so increased that its profits now began to yield a considerable income. This increase of business and emolument was still further aided by the diminishing patronage received by his rival, Bradford, the displaced postmaster, who had, while in office, forbidden his post-riders to distribute any papers but his own. Upon the change which thus took place in their mutual relations, however, Franklin, content with the thriving condition of his affairs, had the neighborly feeling and magnanimity not to retaliate upon his competitor the prohibition just mentioned; and in relating this reversal of their respective positions, he makes the following practical and characteristic comment:—

"Thus Bradford," says Franklin, "suffered greatly from his neglect in due accounting; and I mention it as a lesson to those young men, who may be employed in managing affairs for others, that they should always render accounts and make remittances with great clearness and punctuality. A character for observing such a course, is the most powerful of all recommendations to new employments and increase of business."

It is interesting to note the difference between the movement of the public mail, in those old colonial days,

when its bags of at most but a few score pounds in weight, were almost universally carried on horseback, and in these times, when it is speeded in tons by steam. In 1737, the post-rider went southward from Philadelphia to Newport, in Virginia, once a month; and northward, as far as New York, once every fortnight. In 1743, this activity was so much accelerated that, in summer, the mail was carried southward as far as Annapolis, in Maryland, once in two weeks, and northward to New York every week; though, in winter, the transit, each way, was still at the previous rates. This, moreover, is a fair specimen of the general sluggishness of all social movements in those times, when compared with the intense activity now imparted to them all by steam, which, in every practical sense, has reduced a month to a day, and the seven days of the week to as many hours; while the yet more wonderful application of another of nature's elemental forces, to the spreading of intelligence, has reduced even those hours to seconds.

With a productive business, so well established and methodized as to demand less of his personal attention to its details, Franklin, now at the age of thirty-one years, was led, by his innate desire to be useful to the extent of his ability, to apply his mind, more directly than he had yet done, to the consideration of public affairs, and especially to the concerns of the community to which he immediately belonged. His first effort, in this way, was directed to the improvement of the night-watch of the city. This important concern was, at that time, intrusted wholly to the ward constables, who called out small nightly squads of housekeepers to patrol their respective beats. Such housekeepers as did not or could not turn out, paid to the constable of their ward six shillings each, for the ostensible purpose of enabling him to hire substitutes. But as the sums thus collected, even if faithfully

applied, were more than sufficient for the alleged purpose, and as the constables seem never to have been required to account for the surplus money, great irregularities and abuses ensued. These payments, moreover, when considered as a tax levied to protect property, were monstrously unequal, each non-serving housekeeper paying the same amount, without regard to sex or property.

Franklin's first step toward reforming this objectionable system, was to read before the Junto a paper exposing the inefficiency and abuses of the course pursued. He insisted especially on the gross inequality and injustice of the assessment, under which a poor widow, (to use one of his own illustrations,) who could not render the personal service required, and whose property to be protected might not exceed fifty pounds, was, if a housekeeper, obliged to pay as much as the richest merchant who had merchandise to the amount of thousands of pounds in his warehouses; and he proposed that able-bodied and trusty men should be hired for fixed terms of service, and the expense paid by a general tax fairly apportioned upon property.

This obviously just proposal was approved by the Junto; and on being, by its members, brought forward in the other clubs, as an original proposition in each, it was well received by them also. The new plan was not immediately carried into effect by the city authorities; but, by the course pursued, and the discussions to which it led, not only in the clubs, but in the community generally, the public mind was prepared for it, and in a few years, when the young men belonging to the clubs came to participate more fully and directly in the management of municipal concerns, it was adopted.

Another and still more important service rendered to Philadelphia, about the same period, by Franklin, was the establishment of the first fire-company in that city.

By way of preparation for the accomplishment of his object, he first laid before the Junto, and then before the public, a full and valuable paper on the general subject of fires, calling attention to the manner in which houses and other buildings are often exposed to them by injudicious arrangements in their structure, as well as by the personal heedlessness of their occupants; and suggesting various modes of avoiding such hazards beforehand, as well as different means of extinguishing the flames when kindled.

The publication of this paper was shortly followed by the actual organization of a fire-company, and by other measures for security against fires. At Franklin's suggestions, also, the members of the company were to provide themselves with leathern buckets, for supplying water, and with sacks and baskets for saving goods, and to take them to every fire. They agreed also to meet, from time to time, to communicate facts and exchange views in relation to fires and the best way to encounter them.

The value of this association was soon felt to be so great, that others like it were successively formed, until a numerous and efficient force for the protection of the city was the result; and more than fifty years after, when Franklin was relating these transactions, he took occasion to observe, with a gratification he was well entitled to enjoy, that the *Union Fire-Company*, the first one formed, was still existing, though all its original members were dead, except himself and another person a year older than himself.

Such were some of the services rendered to the community by Franklin in his early manhood. It was the constant tendency of his mind to apply principles to practice — his strongly-marked disposition and ability to be useful, guided by an enlightened and sincere public

spirit, which won for him the esteem and confidence of society, and laid the foundation of that influence with his fellow-citizens, which, to their advantage and the credit of their good sense, not less than to his own honor, he ultimately enjoyed, to an extent not attained by any of his cotemporaries, and probably never surpassed.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHITEFIELD — RELIGIOUS VIEWS — ACADEMIES AND SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATIONS — MILITARY DEFENCE, AND THE QUAKERS — WESTERN POSTS — THE FRANKLIN STOVE.

In his own narrative of this period of his life, Franklin has given an interesting sketch of that celebrated popular preacher, the Rev. George Whitefield, who made his first appearance in this country in the year 1739. As Whitefield, including his various visits, was a good deal in Philadelphia, Franklin became intimately acquainted with him; and though never one of his converts, he was deeply impressed by the earnest and exciting eloquence of the preacher, and held him in high esteem as a thoroughly sincere, honest, warm-hearted, benevolent man.

When Whitefield first presented himself in Philadelphia, the clergy of that city freely admitted him into their pulpits; but for some reason not specifically stated, they pretty soon took offence, and closed their churches against him, so that he was compelled for a time to address the people in the fields. This, however, being found not only inconvenient and uncomfortable, but hazardous to health, a proposal was started among some of his more zealous and active admirers to build an independent meeting-house, to which not only Whitefield, but any other preacher of whatever denomination, should have free access. The proposal instantly took, and subscriptions were speedily obtained sufficient to purchase

ground and erect a plain, substantial edifice, a hundred feet in length by seventy in width. The work was soon done, and the whole property conveyed, in due legal form, to trustees, to be held for "the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion," who should wish to present to the public his views on any religious subject whatever; the purpose, in providing such a house, not being the accommodation of any particular sect, but the people generally.

After some time spent in Philadelphia, Whitefield, proceeded southward as far as Georgia, preaching at all the principal places on his way. Georgia had been organized as a colony only about six years; and its first settlers, as described by Franklin, "instead of being hardy, industrious husbandmen, accustomed to labor—the only sort of people fit for such an enterprise"—consisted chiefly of "families of broken shopkeepers and other insolvent debtors," unqualified both by character and habits for clearing away forests and converting a wilderness into a fruitful country, or for encountering the privations and the various exigencies of a new settlement. The natural consequences of such a beginning speedily followed. These first colonists rapidly perished, leaving a large number of helpless children, whose destitute and wretched condition so deeply moved the quick sympathies of Whitefield, that he straightway resolved upon the project of erecting, in the new colony, an asylum for the support and education of its numerous orphans; and again turning his face northward, he pressed the subject upon his hearers as he advanced, and everywhere so successfully, that, before reaching Philadelphia, he had gathered a large amount of contributions in behalf of the undertaking.

On reaching Philadelphia, Whitefield broached his plans and proceedings to Franklin. The latter, though

concurring in the object proposed, showed his better judgment and more practical good sense, by advising that, inasmuch as neither mechanics nor materials for the work could be furnished in Georgia, instead of incurring the heavy and needless cost of sending everything to the new settlement, it would be wiser, in every respect, not only for the early completion of a suitable edifice, but for the proper management of the institution afterward, to erect the asylum in Philadelphia, and bring the children thither. But Whitefield rejected this judicious advice, and persisted in his preconceived course with such stubbornness, that Franklin, offended at his obstinacy, determined he would give nothing in aid of the undertaking. To this determination, however, he did not long adhere; and he has himself related the manner in which it was overcome, as an illustration of the power of Whitefield's preaching. The anecdote is too interesting to be omitted, and is best told in his own words.

"I happened soon after," says Franklin, "to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all."

Another hearer who agreed with Franklin in relation to the asylum, no less a man than Thomas Hopkinson, the father of Francis, was swayed in like manner by the same sermon. To secure himself against the influence of the preacher, he had purposely omitted to bring any money with him; but as the discourse drew to an

end, he became so warm with the desire to give, that he turned to a Quaker standing by him, an old acquaintance, to borrow money for the purpose. The excitement of his feelings is well indicated by the answer of the Quaker. "At any other time, Friend Hopkinson," said he, "I would lend to thee freely, but not now, for thou seemest to be out of thy right senses."

Though Franklin and Hopkinson were both men of quick and generous feelings, yet were they also men of cultivated minds, and not likely to be much moved by coarse and spurious appeals to their sympathies; so that the testimony thus borne by them to the persuasive power of Whitefield's eloquence, may be considered unequivocal and conclusive.

In repelling some insinuations which had been thrown out against Whitefield's fidelity in applying the money he was collecting for the orphan asylum, Franklin, in the most explicit terms, has declared his conviction that "he was in all his conduct a perfectly honest man." No man, probably, knew Whitefield more thoroughly than did Franklin; who, besides having entertained him as a guest at his own house, and seen much of him in social intercourse, had also transacted a good deal of business with him, as the printer and publisher of four volumes of his sermons and journals; so that these facts, taken in connexion with Franklin's quick and clear insight into character, seem to render his testimony conclusive.

Franklin, moreover, fully confirms the traditionary statements respecting the vast multitudes, counted by thousands, which flocked together, on foot, on wheels, and on horseback, and not heeding the weather, remained for hours in the open air, to listen to the fervid eloquence of the man, who, for his power in swaying masses, must probably be regarded as the most remarkable preacher of modern times.

His voice was doubtless one of the means of his power. "Whitefield," says Franklin, "had a loud and clear voice, and he articulated his words so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance." To test this distance, Franklin once took an opportunity, when Whitefield was preaching from the steps of the Philadelphia courthouse. These steps, it appears, stood on the line of one side of Second street, and fronted the middle of Market street; so that people, to the right and left, in the former street, and in front in the latter, could both see and hear the speaker. By varying his distance to the front, in Market street, Franklin found that he could distinctly hear and understand all that was uttered, until he had receded very nearly to Front street. Taking that distance as the radius of a semicircle filled with listeners, and allowing two square feet to each, he computed that the preacher "might be well heard by more than thirty thousand." This computation, it will be seen, makes no allowance for the number of persons, who, if in the open field, might hear distinctly, though back of the speaker; a number sufficient, probably, to balance the advantage gained, in point of distance, by the passage of the voice along a street compactly built on both sides; and Franklin adds that his experiment "reconciled him to the accounts of Whitefield's having preached to twenty-five thousand in the fields," as well as to what he had read of armies harangued by their leaders.

Franklin expresses his belief that Whitefield would not only have better consulted his reputation, but would have retained a stronger hold on the admiration of the world, and secured a larger body of followers, if he had never published any of his sermons or other writings, but had intrusted his opinions and his fame to oral tradition and the zeal of his proselytes.

A further brief reference, in this connexion, to Franklin's own religious views at this period, seems proper, in order to keep pace with the progress of his mind as he advanced in years; and it will be the more interesting from the fact that the expression of them was called forth in his correspondence with his parents, now drawing near the close of life.

It appears that in March, 1738, his father wrote him a letter, in which much concern was expressed, on behalf of both his parents, lest he had embraced some dangerous errors. In his reply, dated the 13th of April ensuing, and marked throughout by filial respect and affection, Franklin, readily admitting his full share of errors, observes, in substance, that considering the infirmities of our nature, "the influences of education, custom, books, and company," it would evince both vanity and presumption in any man to claim that "all the doctrines he holds are true, and all he rejects are false;" that he thought "opinions should be judged of by their influences and effects; and if a man holds none that tend to make him less virtuous, or more vicious, it may be concluded he holds none that are dangerous," which he trusted was his own case; that "since it is no more in a man's power to *think* than to *look* like another, all that should be expected of him was to keep his mind open to conviction, to hear patiently, and to examine attentively, whatever is offered;" that he had paid little regard to sectarian distinctions; that, as he thought, "vital religion always suffers, when orthodoxy is more regarded than virtue;" and that the Scriptures assure us the awards of the final judgment will turn, "not on what we have *thought*, but what we have *done*."

While on this topic it may be well to cite an affectionate letter of his to his sister, Mrs. Jane Mecom, written a few years later, and speaking somewhat more fully on

one or two points. It seems that she had received the impression, as he understood some passages in a letter from her, that he held the opinion that "good works," would *merit* heaven, and that God was not to be worshipped.

These ideas he repelled by replying to his sister, that "so far from thinking that God is not to be worshipped, he had composed a book of devotions, for his own use;" and that in his belief, "there are few if any in the world so weak as to imagine, that the little good we can do *here*, can *merit* so vast a reward hereafter;" that there were "some things in the New England doctrine and worship, which he could not agree with;" but that he "did not therefore condemn them, or desire to shake her belief or practice of them." He then advises his sister to read certain portions of "the late book of Mr. Edwards, on the revival of religion in New England;" and adds; "when you judge of others, if you can perceive the *fruit* to be *good*, do not terrify yourself that the *tree* may be *evil*, but be assured that it is not so; for you know who has said that men do not gather *grapes* from *thorns*, nor *figs* from *thistles*."

Franklin's private affairs were now in a very prosperous condition. His newspaper, which had obtained a very extensive circulation, and was, indeed, the only one of much importance in Pennsylvania and the adjacent colonies, had become "very profitable," and his "business was constantly augmenting." In these circumstances, as he had found his partnership at Charleston a gainful one, he formed others, with several persons, who had, while in his employ, acquired his confidence both as good workmen and as competent to manage business; thus enabling them to establish themselves advantageously, while his own interest was also promoted.

These partnerships present so judicious a mode of

assisting young men of merit, who have a good trade, but no money, to set themselves up in life, that it may be useful to state the general terms on which they were formed. Franklin furnished those portions of the stock which required the principal outlay of capital, such as the press and types; while the less costly articles were supplied by the other partner, as the wants of business required. The charges for rent, ink, paper, and other current expenses of the office, were deducted from the gross earnings, and then, of the residue of both cash and debts, Franklin took one third and his partner two thirds. These contracts were usually limited to six years, at the end of which his partners were able, in most cases, to buy out Franklin's interest, and go on successfully with the business for themselves. To avoid the disputes, which so frequently disturb and break up such connections, Franklin made it a point to put all the conditions and obligations on both sides, in writing; justly remarking that, whatever may "be the mutual esteem and confidence of the parties, in the outset, some idea of unequal participation in the burdens of the concern, is but too likely to lead to discontents and jealousies, followed by breach of friendship, animosity, and expensive lawsuits."

Another feature of these contracts of partnership, which Franklin has omitted to mention, must, no doubt, have contributed materially to their success. They were obviously liberal on his part. He had the good sense to understand that hard bargains, whatever seeming advantages they may, at first, promise to the party who may have the power to prescribe terms, are seldom the most beneficial in their results; and that not only equity, but sound policy also, requires that contracts covering any considerable length of time, especially such as relate to a business, which, though demanding a moderate

investment of money, must depend more on labor than capital, for its productiveness, should be mutually advantageous to be faithfully executed, and prove, on the whole, really beneficial.

No success in business, or in the accumulation of property, could be more legitimate in itself, or more valuable as an example, than Franklin's; for it was the result of his own industry, prudence, and well-directed enterprise; and he enjoyed his prosperity with a modest and grateful satisfaction. Having provided for the welfare of his family, and thus not only contented his sense of duty, but secured the means of gratifying his affections, he so arranged his private concerns, that, with ordinary oversight and care, his business would continue to yield a moderately-increasing income; and thus he enabled himself to give more time to the studies he liked best, as well as to the public interests.

The community to which he belonged, though in the main a thriving one, was still destitute of some valuable institutions, which a little public spirit, if judiciously directed, might easily supply. Among these were a native military force, properly organized, for the protection of the province; seminaries for the education of youth in the higher branches of knowledge; and some form of association among men of mature years, more or less habitually engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, to promote the investigation of facts in the physical sciences, and the more systematic cultivation of natural philosophy.

In 1743, in the hope of supplying some of the deficiencies referred to, Franklin digested a plan for an academy, at the head of which he proposed that the Rev. Hugh Peters, then unemployed, should be placed as principal. That gentleman, however, looking, as he then was, for a more profitable station, which he shortly found, in the service of the Proprietaries of the province,

as provincial secretary, declined the proffered appointment; and as Franklin was not acquainted with any other person, whom he considered properly qualified for the place in question, the project of the academy was necessarily deferred. The plan of an academy as drawn up by Franklin, is to be found in his works; and it does honor to the author, by its enlightened and liberal views of what should be deemed a thorough practical course of instruction, for at least the more intelligent classes of people living under free institutions, and responsible for the just and successful administration of public affairs, as well as the proper discharge of their social and civil duties.

Another plan, which, about the same time, he proposed, for the formation of a philosophical society, met more immediate success. This plan was drawn up in the form of a circular, dated May 14, 1743, when he was 37 years old, and sent to all who had any reputation for science in the several colonies; and in the spring of 1744, the first organization was effected. In a letter, dated on the 5th of April, 1744, to Cadwallader Colden, then the most distinguished man in the colony of New York, for scientific attainments, Franklin, after stating that the society was actually formed and had already had several meetings, gives a list of the original members, with the department of knowledge to which each was expected to pay especial attention.

It can hardly fail to gratify the reader of the present time, to see who were considered as in the van of science at that early day; and as the list is short, we copy it. Dr. Thomas Bond, a physician, stands first on the roll, and was to give his more particular attention to inquiries and communications on medical subjects; John Bartram, for botany; Thomas Godfrey, for mathematics; Samuel Rhoades, for mechanics; William Parsons,

for geography; Dr. Phineas Bond, for natural philosophy; Thomas Hopkinson, was president of the society: William Coleman, treasurer, and Benjamin Franklin, secretary. To these, who were resident in Pennsylvania, had been added, prior to the date of the letter just mentioned, Mr. Alexander, of New York; Mr. Morris, chief justice, and Mr. Home, colonial secretary, of New Jersey; and Mr. Martin and Mr. John Coxe, private citizens of Trenton, in the same colony. Several eminent men of Virginia, Maryland, and the New England colonies, were expected to join, as soon as they should learn that the society was actually in operation; but their names are not stated.

This association, though its commencement seemed to promise considerable activity, pretty soon began to languish. One or two associations, more or less resembling it, were organized in the course of subsequent years, when, finally in 1768, the original society, and the Medical Society of Philadelphia, after considerable negotiation, merged themselves in a single body under the title of "The American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge." This consolidation took effect in January, 1769: and the institution thus formed has continued to the present day.

This association, projected in 1743, but not actually organized till the spring of 1744, was the first movement of the kind, for promoting philosophical inquiry, in the colonies. In the latter year Franklin published a valuable tract on fire-places. Two years before, in 1742, he had devised the plan of the stove which became so celebrated under his name; and after testing its qualities to his entire satisfaction, he had made a present of the pattern and the whole property in it, to his friend Robert Grace, who was the owner of a furnace for casting iron-wares. To enhance the value of the gift, by extend-

ing the sale of the stove, Franklin drew up the paper referred to, and published it, in 1744. It is entitled "An Account of the New-Invented Pennsylvania Fire-Places;" and may be found in the 6th volume of his works, as edited by Dr. Sparks. It is interesting and instructive, both for its historical details respecting the more important methods of warming houses in the principal countries of Europe, and for its explanation of the principles on which fuel is economized, and health and comfort secured by the manner in which heat is produced and distributed.

Franklin's stove was planned upon the soundest principles; and for diffusing a pleasant, uniform, healthful warmth, especially in the parlor and the study, with wood for fuel, we do not believe it has been surpassed, if equalled, when constructed and set up in full accordance with the plan and directions of its inventor; for it should be observed that the stoves, which, under his name, have been generally used, since the present century came in, have not, in truth, been Franklin's; the distinctive and most valuable part of the genuine stove, (the air-box, or space between the plate immediately back of the fire, and the real back-plate of the stove,) having been wholly omitted, and the peculiar mode of setting it up, disregarded, so that little else than a mere shell of the original Pennsylvania fire-place, has been retained.

Though the invention of this valuable fire-place was strictly original with Franklin, and his title to an exclusive property in it was of the most valid kind, yet he refused to secure it to himself; assigning, as his reason, to those who urged him to do so, that "as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others, by any inventions of our own; and this we should do freely and generously."

This reason is characteristic of the liberal spirit of the author, and consistent with the whole tenor of his life; but it should not be used as an argument against the practice of those who secure to themselves, for their own benefit and that of their families, an exclusive property, for a certain period, in their own inventions. Nothing, surely, can belong to an individual man, considered distinctly from other men, so exclusively and absolutely, as the faculties of mind and his time. No property, therefore, can be so entirely and truly his own, as that which he creates, by employing his time and faculties in applying his knowledge to important practical uses; and no private emolument can be more just and honorable than that, which a man derives from his contributions to the common benefit of society.

Besides these exertions in the cause of education, science, and domestic comfort, Franklin made a strenuous, and to a very important extent, a successful effort, to effect a military organization of the able-bodied population of the province, for its defence against both invasion on the sea-board, and the inroads of the Indian tribes on the frontiers. The action of the provincial government, on this important subject, had been controlled by the Quakers. As the majority of the provincial Assembly usually consisted of members of that denomination, and such as voted with them, all endeavors to procure a general and permanent act for embodying and training an efficient militia, had failed.

Great Britain had, for several years, been engaged in a war with Spain, with which country France had now at last taken part. When it is recollected that France was then, not only in full possession of the Canadas, but that, by means of a succession of posts, extending from the mouth of the St. Lawrence, along the valley of that river, the great lakes, the Ohio, and the Mississippi, to

New Orleans, she covered and commanded the whole vast frontier of the British settlements ; that those posts were trading stations, as well as military positions, and, in connection with a numerous band of Jesuit missionaries, gave her an unrivalled influence with most of the more powerful Indian tribes, it will be readily seen that the dangers to which the colonies were exposed, were well calculated to fill the breasts of reflecting men, even the most resolute and firm, with the liveliest anxiety.

As it had been found impracticable to obtain a law for a general military organization, Franklin proposed to effect as extensive an embodiment of force as possible by voluntary subscription. To prepare the way for such a step, by pressing the subject upon the public mind, he wrote and published a pamphlet entitled " Plain Truth." In this he set forth the defenceless condition of the province, and the necessity and duty of combination and discipline, in as impressive language as he could command ; anticipated and answered objections, particularly such as had been more commonly urged among the people at large ; and announced that articles of association would shortly be presented for general subscription, to serve as a basis for the enrolment, organization, and training, of such of the people as should come forward, in this way, for the patriotic purpose of defending the community from aggression and injury.

The effect of this appeal to the people was surprising and decisive. The articles of association were promptly called for ; and having settled the main points, in consultation with a few judicious friends, Franklin drew them up in due form, and gave notice of a meeting, at which they would be presented for subscription. The meeting was well attended ; numerous printed copies, with pens and inkstands, were distributed among the assemblage to

expedite the signing; and, after Franklin had read the articles, and made a few remarks on their scope and object, they were, as he relates, "eagerly signed, not the least objection being made."

Upon collecting the several papers, after the meeting, twelve hundred subscriptions were counted up as the result of this first movement, in Philadelphia only; and the articles being distributed throughout the province, the number of men who thus voluntarily pledged themselves to unite for the common defence, rose to upward of ten thousand. They all equipped themselves as promptly as circumstances permitted; formed themselves into companies and regiments, under officers of their own choice, and turned out weekly to drill. The women, ever at least as ready as their brethren to obey the call of patriotism, in their own sphere of action, furnished the respective corps with the requisite banners, which were handsomely emblazoned with bearings chiefly devised by Franklin; who was elected colonel of the Philadelphia regiment, in the first instance; but not deeming himself particularly qualified for military command, he modestly declined the office, suggesting that a Mr. Lawrence, (his individual name is not given,) should be chosen instead, which was accordingly done.

Much alarm had been created, about this time in Philadelphia, by the appearance of a Spanish privateer in Delaware bay. Franklin's next proposal was, therefore, to construct a battery at a suitable point on the bank of the Delaware river below the city; and to defray the expense of the work he prepared a scheme for a lottery. The plan was promptly adopted and the battery erected, with a strong breastwork of log-cribs filled with earth. A few cannon, procured at Boston, were placed in the battery; but more being wanted, orders were sent for them to London, and application was also made to the

Proprietaries of the province for aid. But as considerable time must elapse before these measures could take effect, a committee of four, Franklin being one, was despatched, on behalf of the military association, to New York, for the purpose of obtaining the necessary ordnance, as a loan, to be returned when their own supply should be received. This mission resulted in obtaining eighteen guns. "They were fine cannon;" says Franklin, "eighteen-pounders, with their carriages, which were soon transported and mounted on our batteries, where the association kept a nightly guard, while the war lasted," Franklin taking his own turn duly, "as a common soldier."

The public spirit, energy, and capacity, displayed by Franklin, in these emergencies, gained him the respect and confidence of the governor and council; and they advised with him whenever their co-operation with the association was deemed expedient. At his suggestion, too, they proclaimed a public fast, to be accompanied by appropriate religious services, throughout the colony. As this was the first event of the kind, however, in Pennsylvania, Franklin, as a New-Englander and familiar with the usages on such occasions, was requested to prepare the proclamation. He accordingly drew up one, and it was sent throughout the province, both in German and English. The clergy availed themselves of the promulgation of this document, to commend the association to the approbation of the people and urge them to join it; and it would soon, probably, have embraced most of the population able to bear arms, except the Quakers, had not peace shortly superseded this appeal to their patriotism.

Some of Franklin's personal friends felt apprehensive that the leading part he took, in the military arrangements mentioned, would deprive him of the favor he enjoyed

among the Quakers, who always had a strong majority in the provincial Assembly; and that he would thus lose the clerkship of that body. A certain young man, who was exceedingly desirous to be clerk himself, told Franklin, one day, that it had been determined to reject him, when the choice of that officer should come up, at the next session; and advised him to decline being a candidate, rather than suffer the mortification of a defeat. Franklin's reply to his adviser, whose motive he well understood, was quite characteristic. He said to him at once, that he liked the rule, adopted by a man he had read of, neither to seek nor refuse office; and that he should act on the same rule, with only a single addition; for, said he—"I shall never *ask*, never *refuse*, nor ever *resign* an office;" adding that, if the Assembly intended to give the clerkship to another, they should "first take it" from him, as he would not, by *resigning* it, forego his "right of some time or other making reprisal on his adversaries."

The above answer disposed of his competitor, and at the next session Franklin was again made clerk without opposition; for, while he had discharged the duties of that office, in the most correct and acceptable manner, the majority were too shrewd to reject him for the sole reason that he had exerted himself, most efficiently, in providing for the defence and safety of the community. Besides, it was by no means certain, and subsequent occurrences fully showed the fact, that even the non-combatant Quakers really disliked the military measures in question, so long as they were not personally required to take part in them. Franklin, indeed, states that, although they were opposed to *offensive* war, yet he found "a much greater number of them than he could have imagined," unequivocally in favor of such measures as were neccessary for *defence;* and that of the "many

pamphlets, *pro* and *con*, published on the subject," some which were in favor of defensive preparations, were written "by good Quakers."

These views, on the part of that class of people, were still further manifested by the proceedings of the fire-company, to which Franklin belonged, but which consisted mostly of Quakers, a majority of whom, on a motion made by him, voted to appropriate the company's surplus funds, amounting to sixty pounds, to the purchase of tickets in the lottery formed to defray the cost of the battery, already mentioned, for the defence of the city.

The truth is, the non-combatant principles of the Quakers gave them, in the then existing exigencies of the province, not a little embarrassment, especially whenever application was made to the Assembly, on behalf of the Crown, for grants of money, for the public defence. The result of such applications was, generally, a grant of the sums needed, but so worded as to evade an explicit and direct appropriation for warlike purposes. The usual form of the grant was "for the king's use," without particularizing the objects for which the money was to be actually expended.

The form mentioned served well enough, when the call came directly from the king; but in other cases a different phraseology was requisite, and the selection of it was occasionally marked by as much humor as shrewdness. When for instance, a request came from one of the New England colonies for a supply of *powder*, the Assembly of Pennsylvania would not vote money for the purchase of the black-grained munition of war, under its own distinctive name of *gun-powder;* but they voted three thousand pounds, to be subject to the governor's order, "for the purchase of bread, flour, wheat, or *other grain*." To tease the Quaker majority of the Assembly,

the Governor was urged in Council to refuse the grant, as not pursuant to his call; but he well understood the equivocal term, and as it was no time for trifling, he drew the money; and though the *grain* he bought with it, was not a kernel of it wheat, but the "other grain" exclusively, no complaint was made by the Assembly.

Another anecdote will serve further to illustrate this mode of enabling the patriotism of the Quakers to get the advantage of their passive resistance, and will give also a taste of Franklin's humor and ingenuity. When his proposition was pending, in the fire-company, to apply its surplus funds to the arming of the battery for the defence of the city, he was prepared, in order to quiet, if needful, any non-combatant scruples about voting to buy *cannon*, to amend his motion so as to apply the funds to the purchase of *fire-engines*, in which category every sort of fire-arms might unquestionably be classed.

In some remarks on these embarrassments of the Quakers, Franklin intimates that they might and probably would have avoided them, had they not been so fully committed, in print before the world, to their doctrine of the unlawfulness of force in all cases; and he takes the occasion to question the wisdom of such absolute commitment to particular opinions, as constituting a needless impediment to the admission of new convictions of truth and duty, even when clearly presented to the understanding, by further reflection, in the light derived from fuller experience, and more comprehensive views of the various obligations of civil society. To furnish an example of what he deemed "a more prudent course of conduct," he relates an interesting conversation he once had with one of the founders of the sect of Dunkers.

The man referred to, Michael Weffare by name, having complained of slanderous representations of the principles and practices of the sect, Franklin remarked that

such was the usual fate of new sects, and suggested that, to put down the calumnies, they should publish their articles of faith and rules of discipline. Weffare replied, that they had once thought of doing so, but had concluded otherwise, for the reason given by him substantially as follows. When they first formed their society, God had been pleased, as they believed, to give them light enough to see that some doctrines, which they had deemed truths, were errors, and that others, once deemed errors, were truths; that further light had been, by degrees, imparted to them; and that, as they were not now sure that their spiritual knowledge was perfect, they feared to put their faith in print, lest their brethren, and still more their successors, should feel so bound and restricted thereby, as to reject new lights, and thus perhaps arrest their advancement in truth.

Franklin commends the modesty of the Dunkers, and adds the remark, made in the latter part of his life, that the Quakers, to escape annoyances of the kind mentioned, were withdrawing from public employments, "choosing rather to quit their *power*, than their *principles*;" certainly an honorable choice.

CHAPTER XX.

ACADEMY — NEW PARTNERSHIP — PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES — PUBLIC EMPLOYMENTS — INDIAN TREATY — HOSPITAL — CITY STREETS — POST-OFFICE — ALBANY CONVENTION — PLAN FOR NEW COLONIES — PROPRIETARY GOVERNORS — AID TO MASSACHUSETTS.

The war spoken of in the last chapter, having been terminated, in 1748, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, the military association, which Franklin had taken so leading and efficient a part in organizing, dissolved with the return of peace; and he was enabled to turn to more congenial pursuits. About the same period he gave himself a still freer control of his own time and occupations, by forming a partnership, with a very competent and prudent man, who had worked for him several years, by the name of David Hall, who took the entire charge of the business of both the printing-office and the bookstore.

Being thus released from the immediate and constant care of his business Franklin now again bent his efforts, with renewed zeal, to promote the cause of sound education, by the establishment of an academy. Associating with himself some of the most earnest and efficient favorers of the cause, of whom the Junto supplied its full share, he then drew up his plan, which he entitled "Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania," and placed it in the hands of the leading men of the community. When time had been allowed for the consideration of the subject, he started a subscription;

and by judiciously making the sums subscribed, payable in five annual instalments, the amount obtained, as stated by Peters, the secretary of the Proprietaries, was "upward of £800 a year." In doing this, Franklin, though his principal associates well understood the extent of his agency, yet kept himself, in accordance with a rule he had adopted, as much as he could in the back-ground; and when the "Proposals," which were first distributed in manuscript, were printed, he spoke of them in some prefatory remarks, as emanating from several public-spirited gentlemen, at whose instance they were printed, for more convenient and general distribution.

The subscription being closed, and twenty-four trustees elected, two of the number, Franklin and the provincial attorney-general, Francis, being appointed a committee for the purpose, prepared a plan for the organization and management of the academy, which was adopted, and the school was put in operation. The pupils soon became so numerous, that the house first occupied was found too small for their accommodation. It will be recollected that some years previous, under the excitement produced by Whitefield's preaching, a large building had been erected for public worship, irrespective of sectarian distinctions; and that the property and care of the house and ground, had been vested in a legally constituted board of trustees. The feeling which led to that step having passed away, and the trustees being embarrassed and annoyed by the debt it had created, Franklin, who was one of those trustees, as well as a member of the academy board, suggested the expediency of ceding the whole of that property, to the trustees of the academy, for the use of the new school. After some negotiation this measure was effected, on the conditions that the trustees of the academy, should pay the debt for the house and ground; keep open a large hall

for occasional preaching without distinction of sect; and maintain therein a free school for the instruction of poor children in reading, writing, and arithmetic. This arrangement being consummated in legal form, the trustees of the academy discharged the outstanding meeting-house debt, and being put in full possession of the property, forthwith converted the building into a structure of two stories, with suitable apartments for the respective schools; and a little additional ground being purchased to complete the requisite accommodations thither the academy was transferred.

The immediate superintendence of this whole affair, including the alterations made in the building, the purchase of materials, the hiring of workmen, and all other details, devolved on Franklin. Some years after, the academy board was regularly incorporated by a charter from the provincial government; their funds were largely augmented by contributions from England, as well as by donations of land from the Proprietaries and from the provincial assembly; and this academy subsequently expanded into the university of Pennsylvania.

Having acquired "a sufficient though moderate fortune," as he termed it, Franklin, in arranging his private affairs, as already mentioned, intended and expected thus to enable himself to devote his life mainly to those literary pursuits, and especially to those philosophical researches, to which he was so strongly drawn by his predominant tastes and the bent of his genius, and in which he had already made no unimportant advances. To say nothing here of his numerous pieces on the economy of private life and the prudent conduct of private affairs, which had ranked him, while yet in middle age, among the most sagacious observers of his own time or any other; and to pass over various well-considered tracts, filled with enlightened views on the rightful foundation and objects

of all just government, on the freedom of speech and of the press, and other topics connected with political and civil rights and obligations; he had indicated, as early as 1737, the wide range of his studies, in an instructive paper, in which he collected all the valuable observations of ancient and modern writers on the causes and chief phenomena of earthquakes, followed, at intervals in the few years immediately succeeding, by experiments and speculations on various points of animal physiology and other physical questions, discussed in a continually-growing correspondence with the leading scientific men of that day.

In 1747, besides his important pamphlet, entitled "Plain Truth," relating, as heretofore noticed, to the defenceless condition, not only of Philadelphia, but of the province generally, and his arduous, patriotic, and successful labors in effecting the military organization to which that pamphlet led the way, he not only wrote his interesting paper explaining the origin and course of the northeast storms of our Atlantic coast, but, as early as July of this same year, in his correspondence with his scientific friend, Peter Collinson, of the Royal Society of London, he announced to the world for the first time, and on the authority of experiments devised and conducted by himself, what he describes as "the wonderful effect of *pointed* bodies, both in *drawing* off and *throwing* off the electrical fire;" and in the same communication he also announced the important discovery of the opposite electrical conditions of bodies, indicated by the terms *plus* and *minus*, or *positive* and *negative*, on the basis of which he gave, in the succeeding September, the explanation of the phenomena of the Leyden jar, or as he usually termed it, the *Leyden bottle*, which had previously baffled and perplexed the philosophers of Europe.

In the following year, (1748), he further analyzed the electrical *bottle* by a long series of ingenious experiments upon it, showing its true electrical condition under all circumstances, in relation to the substance or internal parts of the glass itself, its surfaces, its coatings, and its whole action. Among other applications, moreover, of electrical agency he applied it as a *motive power*, for the production of useful practical results, to a revolving apparatus of his own contrivance, which he called the *electric jack*, after the machine once in general use for roasting meat. In the communication to Mr. Collinson, (written apparently late in the spring, though the month is not named,) in which he gives the details of these investigations and results, he closes with the following notice of a very remarkable pleasure party — a sort of electrical pic-nic — arranged and enjoyed, doubtless, with rare zest, by himself and some of his philosophical friends.

"The hot weather coming on," says he, "when electrical experiments are not so agreeable, it is proposed to put an end to them for this season, somewhat humorously, in a party of pleasure on the banks of the Skuylkill. Spirits, at the same time, are to be fired by a spark sent from side to side, through the river, without any other conductor than the water; an experiment which we some time since performed, to the amazement of many. A turkey is to be killed for our dinner, by an *electric shock*, and roasted by the *electrical jack*, before a fire kindled by the *electrical bottle;* when the healths of all the famous *electricians* of England, Holland, France, and Germany, are to be drank in *electrified bumpers* under the discharge of guns from an *electrical battery*."*

* The *electrified bumper*, he describes as a small, thin, glass tumbler, nearly filled with wine, and electrified like the *bottle*. This, when brought to the lips, gives a slight shock, if the beard be shaved closely, so as to present no *points*, and the moist breath be not breathed upon the liquor.

In 1749, moreover, in a paper on "thunder-gusts," he began to broach his theory of the *identity* of *electricity* and *lightning*, (suggesting in the same paper the idea that the *Northern Lights* may be electrical phenomena,) and in 1750 he propounded, as one of the consequences and proofs of that identity, the efficacy and utility of *pointed conductors*, now commonly called lightning-rods, for protection against lightning. Though he did not actually make his renowned experiment with the *kite*, till June, 1752, yet all the principles, on which that experiment proceeded, had been evolved in the three preceding years, beginning, as already stated, in 1749. Indeed, in a paper detailing experiments and observations *made* in 1749, but not communicated to Mr. Collinson, till the next season, (for correspondence across the Atlantic was then a matter of months, not of weeks and days,) under cover of a note dated the 29th of July, 1750, Franklin had gone so far as to describe a method, (placing on some tower, or other elevated station, a long iron rod, with its foot insulated in a mass of resin, and its pointed top rising singly above surrounding objects into the air,) by which the truth of his theory, already expounded by him on the evidence of a long train of experiments made by himself and previously communicated, might be demonstrated beyond all doubt or denial; and it was in fact, by pursuing exactly the method thus proposed, that the first European attempt to ascertain the great truth in question, was made and was successful.

The communication above referred to, containing the experiments and reasonings out of which the proposed method grew, though read before the Royal Society in London, was deemed by the more forward and controlling members of that institution, to be too unimportant, not to say frivolous and extravagant, to be published

among their transactions. Indeed, the supposition that the fire, snapping and sparkling from a small glass bottle, and ground out of a small glass cylinder turned by a hand-crank, could possibly be identical with the elemental lightning, was, says Mitchell, a member of the society, in a letter to Franklin, "laughed at by the connoisseurs." Fothergill, Collinson, and a few others, however, thought differently, and procured the publication of the papers bearing directly on the question, in a separate pamphlet, which was soon translated into the French and other languages of continental Europe. One of those pamphlets being read by Buffon, Dalibard, and other philosophical inquirers in Paris, they had a series of Franklin's experiments, as he had described them, performed by M. De Lor, one of their number; and these made so strong an impression upon them, that they determined forthwith to put the hypothesis of identity to the test, precisely and avowedly in the manner suggested by its acknowledged author. Dalibard, who set up his rod, forty feet in length, on the heights of Marly, a suburb of Paris, was lucky enough to obtain from the clouds, the earliest answer to the great question put to them. This was on the 10th of May, 1752. On the 18th of the same month, the same answer was obtained by De Lor, upon the roof of his own house in Paris, with a rod which lifted its sharp point to the height of ninety feet above its base; and the same results were obtained in speedy succession, by similar means, in various other places on the continent of Europe. In one instance, the experimenter, (Professor Richman, who had early acquired a high reputation in philosophy,) while making this grand and bold experiment at St. Petersburgh, in Russia, through some lack of care in managing it, was killed by an unexpected discharge from his rod.

Franklin would himself have put his plan, as above

described, in execution with the first opportunity after conceiving it, had he possessed the means of doing so. It was while waiting for some such means, (which, as it would seem, from some expressions relating to this topic, he had reason to expect would soon be furnished in Philadelphia,) that the simple yet sublime experiment with the *kite* occurred to him; and, without having heard, or, indeed, having had time, by many weeks, to hear a word of what had been done in Paris, pursuant to his previous suggestions, he availed himself of the first opportunity presented by a mass of gathering thunder-clouds, in June, 1752, to send up his kite, with its sharp-pointed wire projecting some twelve inches or more beyond its vertex, which brought the lightning down to him in triumph, demonstrated the great truth he had already drawn from his inductions, and shed unfading splendor on his name.

Besides all this, Franklin, as he wrote to the celebrated Cadwallader Colden, with whom he was in constant correspondence, had, in 1751, by uniting several large electrified jars in one battery, given such intensity to the electric discharge as to melt steel needles, reverse the poles of the magnetic needle, give magnetism and polarity to needles previously destitute of them, and ignite dry gunpowder. He had also asserted the unlimited capability of accumulation of the electric force, affirming that, by enlarging the battery of jars as above indicated, the greatest effects of lightning yet known, might be surpassed; and in another letter to Mr. Colden, dated the 23d of April, 1752, he had questioned the correctness of the received opinion, that the light of the sun proceeds from it in successive particles actually traversing space in the form of rays; and propounded, in opposition to that opinion, the query whether all the phenomena of light might not be better solved "by supposing universal space filled with a subtile elastic fluid, which, when

Franklin drawing down the Lightning.

at rest, is not visible, but whose *vibrations* affect that fine sense in the eye, as those of air do the grosser organs of the ear?"

Such were the pursuits, with their strong attractions, for the sake of which, Franklin had relieved himself from the engrossment of his private affairs, and as he hoped, from the drudgery of public business; and, having enlarged his means of philosophical investigation with additional apparatus, he was bent on giving himself thereto, with renewed ardor and a more exclusive devotion than ever.

But the interest which he had manifested in the defence of the colony, the leading part he had taken in the measures adopted for that end, and the public spirit and ability he had displayed, served more and more to fix upon him the public attention and win the general confidence; and now that he was regarded as a man of leisure, the demand for his services in public affairs was continually increasing. The governor commissioned him as a justice of the peace; he was chosen a member of the common council of the city; and, shortly after, was elected a member of the provincial assembly. This last-named position seems to have pleased him most, not only as being most congenial to his qualifications, but as presenting a broader field of action and of usefulness; though all of them, as being unsolicited testimonies of public respect and confidence, could not be otherwise than gratifying. The conscientiousness, which strongly marked his character, and regulated his conduct in his public employments as well as in his private transactions, was well exemplified by his course in reference to his office as a magistrate. After taking his seat in court, a few times, for the hearing of causes, perceiving that his knowledge of law was not sufficiently extended and exact to enable him to discharge his duties as a judge,

in that thorough manner which alone could satisfy his ideas of their importance, he gradually withdrew from them, and devoted himself more engrossingly to the business of the assembly and the general affairs of the province.

In 1749, he was appointed one of the commissioners, on the part of the province, to make a treaty with the Indians. The meeting for this purpose was held at Carlisle. The number of Indians in attendance being large, to avoid disturbance and bring the negotiation to a speedy and amicable conclusion, no spirituous liquor was permitted to be distributed till the treaty was finished. Immediately after, however, the red-men held a powow, and all of them got drunk. When the powow was over, though the principal chiefs showed some tokens of shame, yet they defended themselves on the ground that the Great Spirit made everything for a particular use, and to that use it should be put; that when he made rum he said, "Let this be for the Indians to get drunk with," and that it must be so. The defence was as valid, perhaps, as any yet urged by the white man to this point.

About this time, Dr. Thomas Bond, one of Franklin's intimate friends, proposed the establishment of a hospital for the sick poor, whether inhabitants of the province or strangers; and made an earnest effort to procure subscriptions for the purpose. Meeting with little success, however, Dr. Bond came to Franklin to engage him in the undertaking, telling him that he was the only man who could insure the accomplishment of the project, inasmuch as almost every person to whom he applied, inquired whether Franklin had been consulted, and what he thought of the plan. Upon learning Dr. Bond's views, and being convinced that the proposed institution would be useful, Franklin became a subscriber, and cooperated zealously in promoting it. Before making any

Indian Pow-wow, at Carlisle.

personal application for other subscriptions, however, he resorted to his usual mode of preparing the way for such applications, by explaining the plan to the public in print; and when the people generally had thus been led to an intelligent consideration of the subject, subscriptions were more freely made.

But it soon became evident that the aid of the assembly would be needed; and a petition for such aid was circulated, which Franklin took charge of. The country members were at first averse to the petition, alleging that the benefits of the institution would accrue only to the inhabitants of the city, and that the funds, therefore, should be wholly supplied by them. Franklin, however, obtained leave to introduce a bill, so drawn as to make the proposed grant conditional; that is to say, if the sum of two thousand pounds should be raised by private subscription, then a like sum should be drawn from the provincial treasury. This condition had a two-fold operation in favor of the proposed institution; for while it secured the passage of the bill by obtaining the votes of those, who did not believe the condition would be met, but, who wished to appear liberal, it served also as a powerful motive for private subscriptions, which soon rose to the required amount and gave effect to the grant. The hospital thus established was duly organized in 1751, and has proved a valuable institution.

An anecdote indicating something of Franklin's prudence in husbanding his influence, as well as the extent of it, may be related in this connection. The Rev. Gilbert Tennent applied to him for his aid in procuring funds by subscription to build a meeting-house for a new congregation, formed chiefly of the followers of Whitefield. Franklin, deeming it unwise and improper to be continually pressing people for money, even for laudable objects, declined; as he did, also, the further request to

furnish a list of those persons whom he had found ready and liberal givers, and whom, for that very reason, he would not single out for annoyance. Mr. Tennent then asked his advice as to the course he should pursue. With this request Franklin promptly complied, by telling him to apply first to such persons as he *knew* would give something; next to such as he considered *doubtful*, showing them the list of those who had already subscribed; and, finally, to those of whom he now expected *nothing*, for he might be mistaken in respect to some of them. Mr. Tennent "laughed," took the advice thankfully, and obtained money enough to build a large and handsome edifice.

About this period Franklin began to agitate the subject of paving the streets of Philadelphia. He commenced in his usual manner, by explaining in his paper the advantages of the plan. The first specimen of the convenience and utility of a pavement was presented at the market-place, near which he lived. This seems to have been effected by the enterprise of individuals; and Franklin himself went through the immediate neighborhood and obtained a subscription at every house, for keeping the pavement in good condition by having it regularly swept. The result of this experiment was so satisfactory that the desire gradually spread throughout the city to have the streets fully paved. This feeling became, in the course of three or four years from the time now referred to, so rife and urgent, that Franklin, shortly before he was sent to England, in 1757, as the diplomatic agent of the province, introduced into the assembly a bill for paving the city by a general tax. He left for England before the bill could be passed; and when he was gone the bill was somewhat changed, though not in his judgment improved, as to the mode of assessing the tax. Another provision, however, which he justly considered

a very valuable one, was introduced into the same bill—a provision for *lighting* the streets. This idea, though generally attributed to Franklin, originated in fact with a private citizen by the name of John Clifford, who had for some time had a lamp in front of his own house; and it suggested so forcibly the increased convenience and security, which would necessarily result from the general lighting of the streets, that the provision for that purpose was introduced and adopted as above stated.

The thorough lighting of the streets of a city is probably the most efficient, reliable, and truly economical part of every system of protective police; and the credit of first suggesting so useful a measure might well be coveted by any public-spirited citizen; and the spontaneous transfer of such credit, therefore, by the man to whom, without any agency of his own, it had been erroneously assigned, and with whom it was resting without dispute, to the person to whom it justly belonged, was unequivocal evidence of honorable feeling. Mr. Clifford, moreover, had been long dead, when Franklin made the explanation in question, which could, therefore, have been prompted only by that innate love of truth and fair dealing, which was, indeed, a strongly-marked trait of his character. There was another merit, however, connected with this subject, which belongs to Franklin; and that was the improvement, introduced by him, in the *form* of the street lamp. The one received from London, and in use there, was the globe-lamp; but it was so insufficiently ventilated that, when lighted, the inner surface soon became thickly coated with lamp-black, which materially diminished radiation. This serious objection was avoided by substituting, on Franklin's recommendation, a square lamp, with flat panes of glass, with a freer access of air at the bottom, and a funnel-shaped top to permit the easy escape of smoke.

This lamp not only gave a better light, but a broken pane could be replaced at much less expense than the cost of a new glass globe.

While on these topics, in regard to which, the course of time has been in some respects anticipated a little, we may advert to some further suggestions, relating to the structure and cleaning of streets, made by Franklin, after he became, as provincial agent, a resident again in London, and communicated by him to his warm friend and admirer, the celebrated Dr. Fothergill. Among other things, he expresses the opinion that, for *narrow* streets, the transverse slope should be made from the sides to the centre, so as to have but one kennel, or gutter; for the reason that, in *such* streets, the water they collect from the rains will be usually sufficient to carry away the wash of the surface, if there be only one kennel, but not enough, if divided, to cleanse *two* such kennels; while, at the same time, the sidewalks and their passengers will be much less exposed to annoyance. He also suggested the use of tight-covered carts for carrying away the mud and other wet filth; and the sweeping of the streets when *dry*, as well as when wet, (the former of which practices had not yet been adopted in London,) but doing it early in the morning, before the opening of shops and houses; for all which, in the long dry days of summer, in that high northern latitude, the habits of the London population allowed ample time, even after the morning sun was up, notwithstanding their complaints of the heavy candle-tax.

Franklin closes his narration of these matters with the remark, that some may deem them too trivial to be worth relating. His comment on this view of such things is eminently characteristic; and the lesson of practical wisdom which it teaches, will be appreciated by all who have formed any tolerably adequate estimate of the value

of time, or of the inevitable results of that perpetual flow of minute occurrences, small wants, momentary gratifications, and petty disappointments, by which the actual discipline of character is effected, and ordinary life influenced for good or for evil. "Human felicity," says Franklin, "is produced not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day. Thus, if you teach a poor young man to shave himself and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than by giving him a thousand guineas. This sum may be soon spent, leaving only the regret of having foolishly consumed it; but in the other case, he escapes the frequent vexation of waiting for barbers, and of their sometimes dirty fingers, offensive breaths, and dull razors; he shaves when most convenient to him, and enjoys the daily pleasure of its being done with a good instrument."

Prior to 1753, Franklin had been employed to examine into the affairs of a number of the more important colonial postoffices, bring their occupants to an adjustment of their accounts, and regulate their management. This employment he had received from the postmaster-general of the colonies; and upon the death of that officer, in the year just mentioned, his functions were conferred upon Franklin and Colonel William Hunter, of Virginia, by a joint commission from the English postmaster-general. The two American deputies were to have six hundred pounds a year between them, provided they could raise that sum from the net proceeds of their office. The colonial postoffice receipts had never been sufficient to pay a shilling of revenue into the English treasury; and to render them productive enough to yield the compensation mentioned, various reforms were necessary, and Franklin immediately set about introducing

them. To do this, however, demanded, in the outset, from the new commissioners, disbursements so considerable that in the first four years the office became indebted to them to the amount of nine hundred pounds. But as soon as the new arrangements had been in operation long enough to produce their proper results, the receipts began to increase; and in a few years they became sufficient, not only to pay the stipulated salary, but to yield the government a revenue, which continued until Franklin, by his exertions in the cause of the colonies, gave such offence to the British government that the postoffice was taken from him, and not a penny of revenue was received from it afterward. About the beginning of autumn, in the same year, 1753, being called to Boston upon postoffice business, Harvard college conferred on him the degree of master of arts, which he had already received from Yale. These honors were bestowed chiefly for his eminence in natural philosophy, and especially his discoveries in electricity.

In 1754, the tokens of another war with France began to be visible; and as the colonies would not only be involved in it, as a matter of course, but were likely to become one of its principal theatres, the British government directed a convention of colonial deputies to be held at Albany, for the purpose of meeting the chiefs of the Indian tribes known as the Six Nations, to concert measures for the common defence, and to secure, if not the active aid of the tribes, at least their friendship and neutrality. The order for this convention issued from the English board of trade; and Governor Hamilton, on communicating it to the Pennsylvania Assembly, together with a recommendation that means should be supplied for making suitable presents to the Indians, nominated Franklin and the speaker of the Assembly, Isaac Norris, to act with John Penn and the provincial secretary,

Richard Peters, as the deputies of Pennsylvania to the proposed convention. The Assembly promptly assented to the nominations, and voted the presents.

The meeting took place at Albany, on the 19th of June, 1754, and consisted of delegates from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

Franklin had meditated much on the expediency of forming a union of the colonies for certain general purposes; and on his way to Albany he sketched a plan of such union, which, while in the city of New York, he submitted to some of the leading men there, whose approbation of its general scope and propositions was so marked, that he laid it before the convention.

Though none of the delegates, except those of Massachusetts, had been *instructed* to undertake anything more than to secure the friendship of the Six Nations, and provide for resisting the inroads of the French and such tribes as might join them, yet the advantages of a closer connection between the colonies had been more or less considered in various quarters; and the delegates of Massachusetts had been expressly empowered to enter into a closer confederacy for general defence and for promoting the common interests of the colonies, in both peace and war. This important question being brought before the convention, that body, on the 24th of June, after voting unanimously that a union of the colonies was "necessary for their security and defence," appointed a committee to consider and report to the convention a plan for such union.

This committee consisted of Thomas Hutchinson, of Massachusetts; Theodore Atkinson, of New Hampshire; William Pitkin, of Connecticut; Stephen Hopkins, of Rhode Island; William Smith, of New York; Benjamin Franklin, of Pennsylvania; and Benjamin Tasker, of

Maryland. After deliberating on several schemes of union presented, the committee agreed upon Franklin's, and on the 28th of June reported it to the convention, where, after being debated for twelve successive days, it was adopted without opposition on the 11th of July, and on the same day the convention broke up.

The plan thus approved provided for the appointment, by the king, of a president-general; and for the election, by the respective colonial Assemblies, of a fairly-apportioned legislative body, to be called the grand council, to meet statedly once a year, and oftener if necessary, but whose enactments were to be subject to the assent of the president-general. When thus passed, they were then to be submitted for final approval to the king in council, and were to take effect as soon as approved, or, if not disapproved, at the end of three years.

The powers of the government thus organized included the making of all treaties with the Indians for the purchase of their lands, the regulation of the Indian trade, and making war and peace with any of the tribes; the formation of new settlements, and the support, defence, and government thereof, until the king should form them into distinct colonies with separate charters; and the raising, organization, equipment, and pay, of all military forces in the colonies, by land and water, for the common defence, and for the protection of the coasting and frontier trade. To defray the expenses of this general government, power was given to lay and collect import duties and internal taxes, and to appoint a treasurer-general, as well as a special treasurer in each colony, if deemed expedient; the moneys thus raised to be deposited in the respective colonial treasuries, subject only to the orders of the general government; and no payment to be made on account of that government, but on the joint drafts of both branches, or in pursuance of special

provision in any act of appropriation. All commissioned military officers, for service on land or water, were to be nominated by the president-general and approved by the grand council; and all civil officers to be nominated by the latter and approved by the former.

The existing civil and military establishments of the respective colonies were to remain unaltered; and in any sudden exigency, each colony might forthwith defend itself without waiting for the action of the general government; but all just and proper charges thus incurred were to be reimbursed from the general treasury. Other provisions were made for carrying the above powers into effect; and the plan was to be submitted to the several colonial Assemblies for their adoption, and then to be finally ratified by an act of parliament.

Such were the outlines of the Plan of Union of 1754, the distinctive features of which were derived from Franklin; and they bore a much nearer resemblance to the present constitution of the United States, than the Articles of Confederation framed by the Continental Congress in 1777. In that particular most essential of all to its own efficiency, namely, its direct action on the people in laying and collecting the taxes and duties necessary to the accomplishment of its objects, it proceeded on the same principle as the present constitution; whereas, the Confederation of 1777 depended on thirteen separate governments for the quotas of revenue necessary to maintain the federal authority, which, as soon as the external pressure of war was removed, was, through that dependence, found too weak to sustain itself. Even during the war, the chief difficulties arose from that same source; and it was the common feeling of danger, together with the patriotic spirit of the times, far more than any real vigor in the government, that enabled the assertors of American independence to achieve their purposes.

But the people of the colonies in 1754 were not yet ripe for so efficient a scheme of government, or so close a union. They needed not only some twenty years' more experience of the evils of dependence on a foreign power, to prepare them fully for independence, but, in addition thereto, the still further experience of the weakness and perils of a loose and inefficient confederation of states, to prepare them for actual union and a real government, endowed with sufficient powers either to insure internal order and tranquillity, or to provide for their common defence against external aggression, or enable them to develop, in peace and security, the resources of the country.

The result was that the plan, upon being submitted to the several colonial Assemblies, was rejected, chiefly on the alleged grounds that it conceded too much to the royal prerogative, and would endanger the liberties of the colonies; while the British board of trade, the channel through which it was to be presented to the king in council, were so jealous of its republican principles, and of the powers it conferred upon the colonies, that they did not even lay it before his majesty. Governor Hamilton, of Pennsylvania, when he communicated it to the Assembly of that province, did indeed express himself in favor of the plan, as being "drawn up with great clearness and strength of judgment." The Assembly, however, through the management of a member, whose name is not given, but who was no friend to Franklin, very unfairly took up the plan in the absence of the latter, and rejected it without examination.

In referring to this matter long after, Franklin himself remarks that the opposite reasons for rejecting his plan of union led him to consider it as having hit just about the true medium: and as nobody at that time entertained any design of separation, but simply and in

good faith sought the most effectual and least burdensome means of protecting the colonies and promoting their best interests, in connection with those of the mother-country, he always adhered to the opinion that it would have proved happy for both parties if his plan had been adopted; for by such a union, the colonies being enabled to defend themselves, no troops from England would have been needed, and the pretext for taxing the colonies by act of parliament, with its consequences would have been avoided.

In the autumn of 1754, Franklin made a visit of several weeks to the east. During his stay in Boston he had various private conferences with Shirley, then governor of Massachusetts, relative not only to the Albany plan of union, but to another one contemplated by the British cabinet, though not yet publicly broached, under which the colonial governors, attended respectively by one or more members of their executive councils, were to meet, from time to time, to take general measures for the defence of the colonies and the protection of their trade; with authority to erect such forts and raise such troops as they should judge requisite, the expense of which was to be paid, in the first instance, from the imperial treasury, but to be subsequently reimbursed by taxes levied upon the colonies by act of parliament. In those conferences, the feasibility of some scheme for the representation of the colonies in parliament was also considered. Franklin, at the request of Governor Shirley, put his views on these subjects in writing, in the form of letters to the governor. In those letters, the consequences of the ministerial projects for the taxation and government of the colonies are pointed out with prophetic sagacity as well as eminent ability; and the great principles which ultimately led to American independence are distinctly and boldly asserted.

At the period now spoken of, France, it will be recollected, held the Canadas and Louisiana, and was aiming to connect those two great colonies by means of settlements and military posts on the great lakes and principal rivers beyond the Allegany mountains. She thus designed to acquire the control of the western Indian tribes, monopolize the trade with them, prevent the extension of British settlements in that direction, and command the entire frontier, as well as the two great routes of the future internal commerce of America by the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi. The success of that policy would have been most injurious, not to say fatal, to the English colonies and the whole circle of British interests in America.

No man understood all this better than Franklin, or exhibited a wiser foresight in pointing out the means of protecting the colonies and placing their interests, and with them the true interests of the mother-country in America, on the most secure and permanent basis. As one of the most effectual of such means, he drew up a plan for the settlement of two new colonies west of the Alleganies, to occupy the extensive and fertile regions on both sides of the Ohio, and between that river, the great lakes, and the Mississippi. Franklin's views on this subject, though the paper containing them is not dated, must have been put into the form now mentioned not long after the separation of the Albany convention, and, as it is supposed, at the request of Thomas Pownall, better known at a later day as Governor Pownall, who was in Albany during the sitting of the convention, and who in 1757 succeeded Shirley as governor of Massachusetts. In 1756, Pownall, having returned to England, prepared a memorial on the same subject, which, together with the plan drawn up by Franklin and sustained by the weightiest reasons, he presented to a mem-

ber of the royal family, to be submitted to his majesty in council. The war with France, commonly referred to in this country, since the Revolution, as "the old French war," had, however, commenced the year before, and it was then no time to begin the foundation of new settlements in one of the most exposed regions of America; but if, by the conquest of the Canadas, as the richest fruit of that war, some of the reasons for the proposed new colonies were rendered less urgent, yet others remained in full force, and were quite sufficient to commend the scheme to early adoption on the return of peace. The scheme did, indeed, ultimately receive the sanction of the British cabinet; but it was at so late a period, that the disputes between the colonies and the mother-country, then deeply agitating the public mind on both sides of the Atlantic, hindered any attempt to execute a project which was finally rendered alike needless and impossible by the result of our revolutionary war. The broad territories proposed thus to be occupied and brought under British jurisdiction, have since furnished room for seven free, independent, and flourishing states of this Union; and their history has more than justified Franklin's high estimate of the value of that whole region, and of the importance, even at that early day, of bringing it under the actual occupation of British settlers, and establishing among the native tribes the ascendency of British influence.

During Franklin's absence on his visit to Boston, as already mentioned, in the latter part of 1754, Pennsylvania received a new governor, Robert Hunter Morris, in place of James Hamilton, who, wearied by perpetual controversy with the Assembly, had resigned his office. Franklin, on his way eastward, had met Mr. Morris in New York, where he had just arrived from England with his commission. Having been previously well acquaint-

ed with each other, Morris, in the course of conversation, asked if he was to expect as quarrelsome and uncomfortable an administration as Hamilton's had been. "No," said Franklin, "you may have a very comfortable one, if you will only take care not to enter into any dispute with the Assembly." Morris, with the good humor that belonged to his character, replied that he loved disputing, but that, to show his regard for Franklin's monition, he would avoid controversy if possible.

When Franklin returned, however, and again took his seat in the Assembly, he found that body and the governor warmly engaged in controversy; and so it continued throughout the administration. Franklin held so prominent a position in the house as well as in the community at large, that he was not only on every committee appointed to answer the speeches and messages of the governor, but was uniformly designated by the committees to draft the answers on the part of the Assembly. "Our answers, as well as his speeches," says Franklin, "were often tart, and sometimes indecently abusive; and as he knew I wrote for the Assembly, one might have imagined that when we met, we could hardly avoid cutting throats. But he was so good-natured a man, that no personal difference between him and me was occasioned by the contest, and we often dined together."

Pennsylvania, it should be remembered, was what was called a *proprietary* province, William Penn being not only the founder and original Proprietary, but the real governor, with power to appoint a deputy to reside in the province and exercise the functions, pursuant to the instructions, of his principal. Upon the death of William, his sons John, Thomas, and Richard, became as well the successors to his political authority as the heirs of his private estates in the province; John, as the eldest of the three, receiving, under the will of their fa-

ther, two shares of the four into which those estates were divided, and Thomas and Richard one each. Before the time reached in our narrative, however, John had died, leaving his estates to Thomas, who thus became possessed of three of the shares originally set out by his father, while Richard had but one. Thomas, moreover, being a more capable and efficient man than Richard, and having so much larger pecuniary interests in the province, the proprietary authority and influence fell chiefly into his hands. The contests between the provincial Assembly and the deputy-governors, (commonly styled governors, inasmuch as the principals resided for the most part in London,) were almost always traceable directly to the instructions referred to, and especially in relation to taxes; for when money was needed even for the defence of the province, or any other general purposes, in which the Proprietaries, by reason of their great possessions, were far more deeply interested than anybody else in the security and growth of the population, they were unjust and mean enough to require their governors, under heavy penal bonds, executed at the time of receiving their appointments, to refuse their assent to any act of taxation, unless their own estates were expressly exempted.

Such instructions and requirements, it is easy to see, must have excited the liveliest and most just indignation in the people of the province and their representatives, and have greatly embarrassed the action of the provincial government. They were, however, sometimes evaded, as in the following instance, which, besides its intrinsic interest, serves to illustrate the character and resources of Franklin's mind too well to be omitted.

War with France, though not formally proclaimed, having in fact commenced, as already intimated, the Massachusetts authorities, early in 1755, projected an expe-

dition to Crown Point, on Lake Champlain, to resist the encroachments of the French in that quarter; and they despatched agents to other colonies to ask for aid. The agent sent to Pennsylvania was Josiah Quincy, of a family distinguished for its patriotic zeal, and one of the firmest, ablest, and most enlightened men of that time. Knowing Franklin not only as a Bostonian by birth, but for his great abilities and high standing in both the Assembly and the community, Mr. Quincy presented himself first to him, to confer with him on the subject of his mission and the best mode of bringing it forward. It was concluded that the object of Mr. Quincy's visit should be presented in a written communication, drawn up in the manner suggested by Franklin, and addressed directly to the Assembly. The application was well received, and promptly answered by a vote of the Assembly granting an aid of ten thousand pounds, to be expended in purchasing provisions for the projected expedition.

But the bill making this grant included other sums, to the amount of fifteen thousand pounds, for the public service, and the whole was to be raised by taxation. When the bill, therefore, came before the governor, he, alleging as usual his instructions, refused his assent to the bill, because it did not exempt the proprietary estates from its operation; and Mr. Quincy's utmost efforts to persuade him to waive his objection were unavailing. In this dilemma, Franklin proposed that the money for Massachusetts should be raised by means of drafts on the trustees of the loan-office, (from which the provincial paper-money was issued,) which drafts the Assembly had authority to make, independently of the governor; but as there was scarcely any money then in the loan-office, the drafts should be made payable at the end of the year, with five per cent. interest, and secured by a

pledge of the fund derived from the interest accruing on all the provincial paper-money then in circulation, and from the excises then collected.

These revenues were well known to be more than sufficient to meet the drafts ; the plan was promptly adopted by the Assembly, and the drafts when issued were in such high credit that they were not only readily taken in direct payment for provisions, but moneyed men, who had cash on hand, gladly purchased them as a temporary investment, for the sake of the interest upon them, knowing that they could readily sell them again whenever they might wish to employ their money in some other way. This business being thus successfully accomplished, Mr. Quincy addressed an appropriate letter of thanks to the Assembly, and, filled with warm and lasting esteem for Franklin, returned to Boston, highly gratified with the result of his mission.

CHAPTER XXI

FRANKLIN'S SERVICES TO BRADDOCK — GNADENHUTTEN AND THE FRONTIER — INCIDENTS AND SENTIMENTS — NEW MILITARY ORGANIZATION — GOVERNOR DENNY — GOLD MEDAL — LORD LOUDON — FRANKLIN SENT TO ENGLAND AS AGENT FOR THE PROVINCE.

In the spring of 1755, Franklin signalized his personal influence, ability, and public spirit, in another branch of the public service. General Braddock, of unfortunate memory, had arrived early that spring, at Alexandria, Virginia, with two regiments of regular troops from England, and had advanced to Fredericktown, Maryland, where he encamped to wait for teams, which he had sent out agents to collect, in the back settlements of Maryland and Virginia, for the purpose of conveying provisions and other stores for the troops on their march to the frontier. The Pennsylvania Assembly having some reason to suppose that Braddock had been led, by false representations, to misconceive their disposition to promote the public service, were anxious to disabuse his mind on that point, and for this purpose desired Franklin to pay him a visit. He was to go, however, not ostensibly as their agent, but as the head of the colonial postoffice department, in order to concert arrangements for expediting the general's official correspondence with the public authorities of the adjacent colonies, and the expenses of which they would defray.

Franklin, who promptly undertook the mission, found

Braddock at Fredericktown, full of impatience for the arrival of the much-needed teams; and remaining with him several days, in constant intercourse, was entirely successful in correcting his erroneous impressions respecting the Assembly, by showing him how they had acted, and what they were ready to do, in aid of his plans. As Franklin was on the point of leaving him, Braddock's agents came in, reporting that they had been able to engage but twenty-five teams, and that some even of that small number were poorly fitted for efficient service. This result surprised the general and his officers. They pronounced the expedition wholly impracticable, as at least six times the number reported were indispensable; and they denounced the ministry for their ignorance in ordering them to a country which could furnish no means of conveyance. Franklin took the occasion to express his regret that the troops had not been directed to Pennsylvania, where almost every farmer kept a wagon. To this remark Braddock eagerly responded, saying to Franklin, that as he was a man of influence there, he could probably procure the necessary teams, and pressing him to undertake the business. Upon inquiring on what terms the teams were to be raised, Franklin, at the general's request, made a brief statement in writing of such terms as he deemed reasonable; and these being approved, he was forthwith furnished with the requisite authority and instructions, and departed.

On reaching Lancaster, he issued advertisements, dated the 25th of April, 1755, stating that he was empowered to make contracts for one hundred and fifty wagons, with four horses and a driver to each; and for fifteen hundred pack-horses; naming the days on which he would be at Lancaster and York to execute such contracts, and that he had sent his son into Cumberland for the same purpose. To give additional efficacy to his

advertisements, he published an address to the people, appealing to their public spirit, assuring them that the proposed service would be neither burdensome nor hazardous; that the contracts would put in circulation more than thirty thousand pounds, to the great advantage of the community; that the troops sent over the sea for their defence, could not act without the means called for, which, if not furnished by voluntary contract, would be taken by a forced levy, to the great annoyance and injury of the inhabitants; and that he had himself no pecuniary interest in the matter, as he should receive no compensation for his services, except only the satisfaction arising from endeavors to be useful.

Franklin received from Braddock eight hundred pounds, to pay such advances as might become indispensable to secure the object; but this proving too little, he not only paid the further sum of two hundred pounds of his own money, but found himself constrained to back the contracts by giving his own bonds for their performance; the farmers alleging that they knew nothing of Braddock, or how far they could rely on his faith, or means of payment. This was not all. Learning, while at the camp, that the subaltern officers in the expedition were generally in straitened circumstances, and could not afford to supply themselves with many of the stores that might become necessary for their comfort on their march through the forests, Franklin, without imparting his design to any one, wrote to a committee of the Pennsylvania assembly, which had the control of a small fund, stating the condition of the officers in question, and urging the committee to make them a present of supplies of the kind needed. The committee complied so promptly that these stores arrived in camp at the same time with the wagons and pack-horses, and were received with the most grateful acknowledgments. General

Braddock also expressed his obligations to Franklin for the important services he had rendered, cheerfully repaid his private disbursements, and earnestly requested his further aid in forwarding provisions during the march of his troops to the frontier. Franklin consented, and continued his valuable services, until the expedition terminated in that overwhelming disaster so well known as "Braddock's defeat."

In rendering these services, Franklin not only gave his most efficient personal efforts, but he actually paid out upward of a thousand pounds sterling of his own money. Fortunately for him, his accounts for these advances reached Braddock a few days prior to the disaster referred to, and the general immediately remitted an order on the paymaster of his forces for the round thousand, leaving the balance for another opportunity.

Franklin, who saw a good deal of Braddock, speaks of him in the following terms: "This general was, I think, a brave man, and might probably have made a figure as a good officer in some European war. But he had too much self-confidence, too high an opinion of the validity of regular troops, and too mean a one of both Americans and Indians. George Croghan, an Indian interpreter, joined him on his march with one hundred of those people, who might have been of great use to his army, as guides and scouts, if he had treated them kindly; but he slighted and neglected them, and they gradually left him." Talking of his designs one day to Franklin, he said, "After taking Fort Du Quesne, [where Pittsburg now stands,] I am to proceed to Niagara; and having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time, as I suppose it will; for Du Quesne can hardly detain me above three or four days; and then I see nothing to obstruct my march to Niagara." To this, Franklin modestly replied: "To be sure, sir, if you arrive well

before Du Quesne with these fine troops so well provided with artillery, the post, though completely fortified, and with a very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march is from the ambuscades of the Indians, who are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, nearly four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attacked by surprise on its flanks, and cut like a thread into pieces, which, from their distance, can not support each other." Braddock, with a self-complacent smile, answered, "These savages may indeed be formidable to your raw American militia; but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression."

Such blind self-confidence and lamentable ignorance of the true nature of the service undertaken, as well as of the character of the enemy to be encountered, made all further suggestions useless: they could be cured only by one of those crushing disasters which are their legitimate consequence, and Franklin said no more. But the very first intimation this unfortunate commander had of the presence of "these savages," was the opening of their deadly fire upon him from their ambuscade, which ended in laying upward of seven hundred of his men dead on the field of battle, and in his being himself carried from it mortally wounded; while all that was done in the way of rallying and saving even the wreck of the army, was accomplished by the "raw American militia," commanded by a young American colonel named George Washington. Captain Orme, one of Braddock's aids, severely wounded, was carried from the field with him, and continued near him during the two days he survived. That officer afterward told Franklin that the general remained silent all the first day till night, when he only said, "Who would have thought it?" — that he was again

silent the next day until near its close, when he said, "We shall know better how to deal with them another time"—and in a few minutes after expired.

Upon the death of Braddock, the command of his forces devolved upon Colonel Dunbar, who had been left in rear with a strong reserve and the principal part of the stores. When the fugitives from the battle reached the camp, they communicated their panic so effectually to Dunbar and his men, that, after destroying their stores, to have more horses to aid their flight, the whole body, still numbering over a thousand, with their commander at their head, instead of moving forward to meet the enemy, consisting of some four or five hundred Indians and French, and to retrieve the honor of "the king's regular and disciplined troops," or to protect the frontier, as half their number of "raw American militia" would have done, if as well equipped and provisioned, used their very best diligence to reach the settlements, and could not, indeed, be persuaded to stop till they were safe in Philadelphia.

This pusillanimous and precipitate retreat, though disgraceful to Dunbar and his forces, and though it increased, for the time, the danger of the frontier settlements, taught the colonists a most useful lesson, inasmuch as the whole affair, in the words of Franklin, "gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regular troops had not been well founded." This lesson, moreover, was further enforced by the conduct of the same troops while on their advance from the seaboard into the interior, during which they committed great outrages, rifling many inhabitants of their property, "besides insulting, abusing, and confining the people," says Franklin, "if they remonstrated;" and he adds, "This was enough to put us out of conceit of *such* defenders, if we had really wanted any."

Upon the surprise and defeat of Braddock, his correspondence and other papers fell into the hands of the French, who, for the purpose of showing the hostile designs of the English government before the war actually broke out, subsequently published some of them, in which Franklin had the well-deserved satisfaction of seeing that the unlucky general had dealt by him with honor and good faith, in not only appreciating justly his services to the expedition, but in warmly recommending him to the notice of the British ministry; though, in consequence of the unhappy issue of Braddock's enterprise, or for some other reason, those recommendations were never acted on. "As to rewards from Braddock himself," says Franklin, "I asked only one, which was, that he would give orders to his officers not to enlist any more of our bought servants, and that he would discharge such as had been already enlisted. This he readily granted, and several were returned to their masters on my application." Dunbar, however, behaved very differently; for although on Franklin's application to him, in Philadelphia, to discharge the servants of certain farmers of very limited means in Lancaster county, he promised to restore them to their masters if the latter would present themselves to him at Trenton, on his intended march to New York, yet when they came he broke his promise.

The servants here meant, it should be observed, were such as have been more generally known as "redemptioners." They were poor emigrants from Europe, who sold their personal service for a specific term of years, as their only means of paying the expenses of emigration and securing employment afterward, by which they could redeem or buy out their time and make other provision for themselves. They stood in something like the same relation to those who thus purchased their service, as indented apprentices to their masters; and the enlistment

of them, without the consent of their masters, was a grievance similar to that of enlisting apprentices in the same way.

Not only did Franklin receive no compensation for his great services to Braddock and his troops, but those very services came near stripping him of his property. Having, as already stated, given his own bonds as surety for the payment of all loss and damage of the horses and wagons furnished to transport the various supplies for those troops, when the loss of the property thus furnished was known, the owners came directly upon him for their pay; and it was only after much exertion and anxiety that he was relieved from his hazardous position by General Shirley, then commander-in-chief of the king's forces in America, on whom this and much other business left unsettled by Braddock devolved, and by whose orders these claims, amounting to nearly twenty thousand pounds, were examined and paid.

Many testimonies, besides those already adverted to, are extant, showing the great value of Franklin's services to Braddock and to the public, and the high esteem in which he was held, not only by General Shirley and other high British functionaries in the colonies, but also by the people of Pennsylvania and their Assembly. General Shirley, who, though governor of Massachusetts, was then with a British force at Oswego, on Lake Ontario, in his letter to Franklin, dated the 17th of September, 1755, announcing the orders he had issued for ascertaining and paying the above-mentioned claims, assures him that if he had earlier understood the position in which he was placed, he should sooner have enabled him to fulfil the contracts in question, "not only because common justice demanded it, but because such public-spirited services deserve the highest encouragement;" and, although much pressed by business preparatory to his de-

parture for Niagara, he adds that he "can not conclude without assuring" him that he has "the highest sense of his public services in general." A letter from Israel Pemberton, a Quaker of Philadelphia, to Dr. Fothergill, of London, after mentioning various instances of Franklin's public labors at the same period, speaks of his presence in the back settlements of Pennsylvania, while procuring teams for Braddock, as the *providential* means of averting, especially from the Quakers, the outrages which would otherwise have ensued from a forced levy of wagons, horses, and men, by the "madman," Sir John St. Clair, quartermaster-general of the expedition; and adds: "Franklin's conduct throughout this affair was very prudent, and indeed he was the only person who was alone equal to it. The Assembly, sitting immediately after his return home, unanimously thanked him for it. The satisfaction of serving a people whom he respects, and his quick sense of the injurious treatment they meet with, animated Franklin so effectually, that I am in hopes it will engage him to act steadily and zealously in our defence."

Franklin's exertions to promote the public service were as efficient in the Assembly as they had been among the people. In one important particular, however, it was exceedingly difficult to render any exertions available. Every bill passed by the Assembly for raising money by tax for the common defence and welfare was *vetoed* by the governor, pursuant to his instructions, for not exempting the estates of the Proprietaries. In ordinary and peaceful times, this gross injustice attracted but little attention out of Pennsylvania; but in the emergency which followed Braddock's defeat, the exposed condition of the colonists, and the necessity for supplies, drew upon the Proprietaries the indignation of many in England, some of whom openly insisted that, in thus obstructing the de-

fence of the province, by refusing to bear their equal and just share of the necessary cost of that defence, the Proprietaries forfeited their rights under the charter. This alarmed them to such a degree, that they sent orders to the receiver of their revenues in Pennsylvania to pay into the provincial treasury five thousand pounds in addition to such sums as should be raised by the Assembly for public purposes. This being certified to that body, it was agreed, in view of the existing public exigency, to regard it as equivalent to so much money levied by a general tax; and an act was forthwith passed for raising sixty thousand pounds, which, as it exempted the Proprietary estates, was signed by the governor.

Franklin having taken an active part in framing and passing this act, was appointed one of seven commissioners for directing the expenditure of the money. While this measure was pending, he prepared another bill, which also became a law, for organizing a body of militia by voluntary enlistment. To avert the opposition of the Quakers to the latter bill, they were exempted from its operation; while, for the purpose of recommending his plan of organizing the military force contemplated by it to the public generally, he wrote and published an able tract, in the form of a dialogue, in which he stated and answered, with marked effect, as the result gave him good reason to believe, all the objections he understood to be urged against it.

While the organization and training of this militia were going on, Franklin was persuaded by Governor Morris to accept a commission, with ample powers to raise, organize, and station a military force, and erect forts, for the protection of the northwestern frontier of Pennsylvania. The selection of his subordinate officers, among whom it is gratifying to find that the intrepid Wayne was one of the captains, was also submitted to himself

alone, blank commissions for them being furnished by the governor; and the troops, to the number of five hundred, to be raised for this purpose, were to be stationed at his discretion, and employed in such manner as he should direct. The men were soon raised, and his son William, who had been a subaltern officer in the preceding war, became very serviceable to him as his aid-de-camp.

The frontier to be protected was the extensive district stretching northeasterly and southwesterly about midway between the Delaware and Susquehannah rivers, now principally included in the counties of Pike, Monroe, Northampton, Schuylkill, and Lebanon, and drained chiefly by the rivers Schuylkill and Lehigh, with their tributaries, and other smaller streams flowing to the Delaware. Franklin ordered his troops to rendezvous at Bethlehem, on the Lehigh, the chief town of the Moravians, whose inhabitants, though a pacific people, had taken such alarm at the recent burning and massacre by the Indians at Gnadenhutten, one of their back settlements, that they had surrounded their larger buildings, which were of stone, with stockades, and had even supplied the chambers of their stone houses with piles of stones intended for the women to cast upon the Indians, if assailed, while a regular watch was kept up by patrols of armed brethren; so that when Franklin arrived there, he found the place well prepared for defence.

The plan for the general protection of the frontier was to erect three forts or strong blockhouses: one at Gnadenhutten; another at a distance of fifteen or twenty miles further north in the direction of a post called Fort Hamilton, previously established on or near Broadhead's creek, and not far from the head-waters of the Lackawaxen; and the other at about the same distance southwardly in the direction of Fort Lebanon, erected at an earlier day

near the forks of the Schuylkill. The post at Gnadenhutten was to be the principal one, from which both men and supplies were to be sent, as occasion might require, to the smaller garrisons to be placed in the other forts, and a corps of mounted rangers was to be kept moving from post to post along the whole line, which would thus be extended from a point on the Delaware not far from the confluence of the Lackawaxen, nearly or quite to the Susquehannah in the neighborhood of Middletown.

To execute his plan, Franklin determined to proceed first to Gnadenhutten with the main body of his force, and having established that post, send out detachments each way to construct the other two, which he could easily cover and supply from the principal garrison. He left Bethlehem with his troops on Friday, January 16, 1756, accompanied by seven wagons with provisions and other stores. His route was up the valley of the Lehigh ; the road was rough, the weather rainy, the march toilsome ; and the gap of the mountain, through which the Lehigh makes its way, exposed the party to great danger of being cut off, had a resolute and active enemy taken advantage of that rough and narrow pass. The order of march, however, was arranged with such good judgment, and conducted with such vigilance, that although two Indian scouts came so near one night as to draw the fire of a sentinel, the whole party reached Gnadenhutten on the third day about noon, in safety and good spirits ; and by nightfall they were encamped under cover of a good breastwork constructed during the afternoon.

Thomas Lloyd, who was in the expedition, and kept a diary, describes Gnadenhutten, when they reached it, as presenting "one continued scene of horror and destruction. Where lately flourished a happy and peaceful village, it was now all silent and desolate : the houses burnt ; the inhabitants butchered in the most shocking

manner; their mangled bodies, for want of burial, exposed to birds and beasts of prey; and all kinds of mischief perpetrated that wanton cruelty could invent. We have omitted nothing that can contribute to the happiness and security of the district; and Mr. Franklin will at least deserve a statue for his prudence, justice, humanity, and above all for his patience."

As soon as they had provided for the security of their temporary camp, they went vigorously to work to construct their fort; and notwithstanding it rained so much of the time as materially to retard their labor, yet before the end of a week it was completed. The fort consisted of a strong stockade made of palisades about a foot in diameter, set three feet in the ground, rising twelve feet above it and sharpened at top, with a platform inside all round at half the height, and two ranges of loopholes for musketry, to fire through from the ground and from the platform; and comfortable log-houses within for the shelter of the garrison. The area enclosed was one hundred and twenty-five feet in length by fifty in width. In a letter to a friend, dated at Gnadenhutten, the 25th of January, 1756, Franklin, after describing the rapid progress of the work, says: "This day we hoisted our flag, made a general discharge of our muskets, which had been long loaded, and of our two swivels, and named the place *Fort Allen*, in honor of our old friend."

Franklin was here in a new position; but, as in every other scene of his active life, it served only to place in a new light the value of his clear practical understanding with other admirable qualities of his well-proportioned nature, and to furnish new matter of observation to his ever-vigilant mind. The important service committed to his charge was promptly and discreetly performed, and in his narrative of it he takes occasion to remark, among other things useful to be noted by all who have

Building Stockade Fort at Gradenhutten.

the direction of any considerable bodies of men, that they were most contented and tractable when fully employed; that while at work they were cheerful and efficient, executing their duties well; but when for any reason their labors were suspended, they grew captious and quarrelsome, grumbling at their provisions, and in continual ill humor; reminding him, as he says, of the sea-captain, whose rule it was to keep his crew busy, and who, when his mate told him one day that there was nothing for them to do, gave order that they should scour the anchor.

As soon as the fort was finished and a cover thus provided in case of need, detachments from the garrison began to reconnoitre the adjacent country. No Indians were seen, but marks of their recent neighborhood were detected in various places, where they had been lurking, to watch what was going forward in and around the fort. One of their expedients, while thus engaged, for securing comfort, without betraying their place of concealment, was so ingenious, that Franklin describes it. The season made a fire necessary; but a fire kindled in the usual way on the surface of the ground being unsafe, they dug holes in the earth two or three feet in depth and width, in the bottoms of which they made small fires of charcoal chipped with their hatchets from burnt logs and stumps. Round these they sat with their legs hanging down from the knees, and their feet just above the coals, thus securing a very essential condition of rapid movement, while there was neither flame nor smoke to betray them. The prints of their bodies as thus disposed were plainly seen round several such holes; but they were too few, it appeared, to expect any advantage from an attack on the garrison, or even its scouting-parties.

By the time Franklin had effected the arrangements for guarding the back settlements, he received a com-

munication from Governor Morris, informing him that the Assembly had been summoned to meet, and wishing him to attend, if he could prudently leave the frontier. He received various letters also from his private friends, to the same effect; and as the back settlers now felt pretty secure on their farms, he determined to return home. He did so the more readily, to quote his own words, "as a New-England officer, Colonel Clapham, experienced in Indian warfare, being on a visit at Fort Allen, consented to accept the command." Having paraded the troops, therefore, he read to them the commission he had prepared for Clapham; introduced him to them as a skilful officer, better qualified than himself for the command of such a post; and adding some friendly and cheering words of exhortation and encouragement, took leave, accompanied by an escort as far as Bethlehem.

While at Gnadenhutten, Franklin received from Philadelphia, through the considerate affection and hospitable bounty of Mrs. Franklin, various consignments of cold roast-meats, mince-pies, apples, and other table-comforts, which he shared freely with those about him; and, in his letters to his wife, he gives a pleasant account of his situation, showing that the same buoyant and kindly nature that made his home a happy one, served also to impart a tone of cheerfulness to life at Fort Allen. "We have," says he, under date of January 25, 1756, "enjoyed your roast beef, and this day began on your roast veal. All agree that they are both the best that ever were of the kind. Your citizens, that have their dinners hot-and-hot, know nothing of good eating. *We* find it in much greater perfection when the *kitchen is fourscore miles from the dining-room.* The apples are extremely welcome, and do bravely after our salt pork. . . . . As to our lodging, it is on *deal feather-beds*, in warm blankets. . . . . Ev-

ery other day, since we have been here, it has rained more or less, to our no small hinderance. . . . . All the things you sent me, from time to time, are safely come to hand, and our living grows every day more comfortable. . . . . All the gentlemen drink your health at every meal, having always something on the table to put them in mind of you. . . . . We all continue well, and much the better for the refreshments you have sent us. In short, we do very well; for, though there are many things besides what we have, that used to seem necessary to comfortable living, yet we have learned to do without them."

In November of the same year, while at Easton, with other commissioners, attending a conference with the headmen of the Delaware Indians, being disappointed in not receiving a line from his wife by a very convenient opportunity, he writes to her in a playful vein of mock resentment, a specimen of which may be pleasant to the reader; "My dear child," (his usual style of address to her,) "I wrote to you a few days since, by a special messenger, and enclosed letters for all our wives and sweethearts, expecting to hear from you by his return, and to have the northern newspapers and English letters per packet; but here he is without a scrap for poor *us*. So I had a good mind not to write you by this opportunity; but I can never be ill-natured enough, even when there is most occasion. . . . . I think I won't tell you that we are all well, nor that we expect to return home about the middle of the week. My duty to mother, [his wife's mother,] love to children, &c., I am your loving husband. — P. S. I have scratched out the *loving* words, they being writ in *haste, by mistake*, when I *forgot* I was *angry*."

This buoyancy of spirit, from which cheering influences are ever emanating, if not as indispensable, in the

leader of an enterprise, whether of difficulty or danger, as the ability to plan and command, is at least of high value when associated with such ability, especially when men are placed in unforeseen and unusual circumstances; and Franklin's deportment in relation to his private affairs, as well as in his long career of public service, presents abundant evidence of the union in himself of both qualities.

In connection with the agreeable indications of character just given, it will be interesting to turn for a moment to some evidence of Franklin's sentiments and of the tone of his feelings and affections, in relation to sadder and more sober themes. On his return home from the frontier, he received news of the death of his brother John, at Boston. This brother had married, for his second wife, a widow by the name of Hubbard, to whose daughter by her first husband was addressed the letter from which the following passages are taken :—

"I condole with you," says Franklin to Miss Hubbard. "We have lost a most dear and valuable relative. But it is the will of God and nature that these mortal bodies be laid aside, when the soul is to enter into real life. . . . . We are spirits. That bodies should be lent us, while they can afford us pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge, or in doing good to our fellow-creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God. When they become unfit for these purposes, and afford us pain instead of pleasure, instead of an aid become an incumbrance, and answer none of the intentions for which they were given, it is equally kind and benevolent that a way is provided by which we may get rid of them. Death is that way." In a letter to his sister Jane and her husband, Edward Mecom, on occasion of the death of his aged mother, who, in her last years, had been most kindly tended by them, he refers to her in the tenderest tone of filial

affection, and expresses his grateful thanks to them for the personal and long-continued care of her, which his distance put it out of his own power, or that of his family, to bestow; and in another letter to the same sister, upon the death of one of her children, he says: "I am pleased to find that, in your *troubles*, you do not overlook the *mercies* of God, and that you consider, *as such*, the children still spared to you. This is a right temper of mind, and must be acceptable to that beneficent Being, who is, in various ways, continually showering down his blessings upon many who receive them as things of course, and feel no grateful sentiments arising in their hearts on the enjoyment of them."

His respect and affection for his mother were strong, and manifested themselves among other ways in frequent presents that contributed to her comfort and solace in her advancing years. In one of his letters to her, for example, he sends her a *moidore*, a gold piece of the value of six dollars, "toward chaise-hire," says he, "that you may ride warm to meetings during the winter." In another, he gives her an account of the growth and improvement of his son and daughter; topics which, as he well understood, are ever as dear to the grandmother as to the mother. Of the character and capacities of the son it will be sufficient to say that, before he was thirty-five years old, he was appointed governor of New Jersey, under the administration of Lord Bute, shortly after the accession of George III. to the British throne. Of the daughter, afterward Mrs. Bache, he says: "Sally grows a fine girl, and is extremely industrious with her needle, and delights in her work. She is of a most affectionate temper, and perfectly dutiful and obliging to her parents and to all. Perhaps I flatter myself too much, but I have hopes that she will prove an ingenuous, sensible, notable, and worthy woman, like her aunt Jenny;"

and he adds the following notice of himself: "I enjoy, through mercy, a tolerable share of health. I read a good deal, ride a little, do a little business for myself and now and then for others, retire when I can, and go into company when I please. So the years roll round; and the last will come, when I would rather have it said, '*He lived usefully,*' than '*He died rich.*'"

Among the more marked evidences of the generous interest he took in the welfare of his kindred, as well as the prudence and good sense with which he manifested that interest, may be mentioned his furnishing one of his nephews, Benjamin Mecom, with the means of establishing himself in business as a printer, first in the island of Antigua, and subsequently in Boston, together with the manner in which this was done. He reserved to himself, in the outset, one third of the profits, as in his other partnerships in the same business; intending, however, from the first, as he wrote to his nephew's mother, not only to give him ultimately the whole establishment, but also the accumulated proceeds he might have himself received during the connection; but deeming it judicious to reserve to himself, as a partner, the right to exercise some control over his nephew till he should acquire some experience and correct a certain fickleness of purpose which he had occasionally evinced. Being encouraged by the management of his nephew, he shortly modified the terms of the connection, so as to require him merely to pay over a certain portion of his profits to his mother, together with a small amount of sugar and other articles for his own family, and he might appropriate all the rest of his earnings to himself. The result was favorable, as appears by a subsequent letter, written to the parents of his nephew on the arrival of the latter at Philadelphia from Antigua, on his way to Boston. In that letter, Franklin states that his nephew had settled all his ac-

counts honorably, had cleared his printing-office, and had good credit and some money in London, with which, together with some further assistance from himself, the young man was going to Boston to set himself up as a printer and bookseller.

While awaiting at New York the lingering movements of Lord Loudon, Franklin, under date of the 19th of April, 1757, wrote to Mrs. Mecom respecting their half-sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Dowse, a letter so strongly marked by that considerate kindness of heart which was one of the most deep-seated and habitual sentiments of his breast, that we can not forego the gratification of transcribing portions of it, not only in justice to him, but also in the hope that others may profit by it. Mrs. Dowse was the eldest child of Franklin's father by his first wife, and was now eighty years old, having been born at Ecton, in England, March 2, 1677; and though her husband was yet living, they were so poor as to need occasional assistance from their friends. It is to this aged sister that the following passages refer: "As *having their own way* is one of the greatest comforts of life to old people, I think their friends should endeavor to accommodate them in that, as well as in anything else. When they have lived long in a house, it becomes natural to them; they are almost as closely connected with it as the tortoise with his shell; they die, if you tear them out of it. Old folks and old trees, if you remove them, it is ten to one that you kill them; so let our good old sister be no more importuned on that head. We are growing old fast ourselves, and shall expect the same kind of indulgences; and if we give them, we shall have a right to receive them in our turns. . . . . I hope you visit sister as often as your affairs will permit, and afford her what assistance and comfort you can in her present situation. *Old age*, *infirmities*, and *poverty*, joined, are

afflictions enough. The *neglect* and *slights* of friends and near relations should never be added. People in her circumstances are apt to suspect these — sometimes without cause; and *appearances* should, therefore, be attended to, in our conduct toward them, as well as *realities*."

Writing again at New York, in May, 1757, to Mrs. Mecom, in reply to inquiries from her respecting a young woman with whom her son Benjamin had become acquainted in Philadelphia and whom he intended to marry, and whose good qualities as "a sweet-tempered, good girl," with "a housewifely education," both Franklin and his wife well knew, he remarks: "Your sister and I have a great esteem for her; and if she will be kind enough to accept of our nephew, we think it will be his own fault if he is not as happy as the married state can make him. The family is a respectable one, but whether there be any fortune I know not; and as you do not inquire about *that* particular, I suppose you think, with me, that where everything else desirable is to be met with, *that* is not very material. If she does not *bring* a fortune, she will help to *make* one. Industry, frugality, and prudent economy, in a wife, are to a tradesman, in their effects, a fortune."

One or two more extracts, covering somewhat broader ground, will make a fit and interesting close to this exhibition of Franklin's private sentiments and family ties. They are from a rather long letter dated the 6th of June, 1753, and usually cited as addressed to his friend Whitefield, the famous preacher; though Dr. Sparks, on looking at the original draft, found it endorsed by Franklin's own pen as addressed to one Joseph Huey. Referring to an expression of thanks from the person addressed, for some kindness done him by Franklin, the latter remarks that the only return he should desire would be an

equal readiness, on his part, "to serve any other person who might need his assistance, and so let good offices go round; for mankind are all of one family;" and he then proceeds as follows:—

"For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favors, but as paying debts. In my travels, and since my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return; and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men, I can therefore only return on their fellow-men; and I can only show my gratitude for these mercies from God, by a readiness to help his other children, my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to *merit* heaven by them. By *heaven* we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree, and eternal in duration. I can do nothing to *deserve* such rewards. He that, for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person, should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands compared with those who think they *deserve* heaven for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixed, imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world, are rather from God's goodness than our merit: how much more such happiness of heaven! . . . . The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons may be useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth *leaves*, though it never produced any *fruit*. Your great Master thought much less of these outward appearances and professions than

many of his modern disciples. He preferred the *doers* of the word to the *mere hearers;* the son that *seemingly* refused to obey his father, and yet *performed* his commands, to him that *professed* his readiness, but *neglected* the *work;* the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable though orthodox priest and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted; when those who cry, 'Lord! Lord!' and who value themselves upon their faith, though great enough to perform miracles, but have neglected good works, shall be rejected."

Just before going to the frontier, it will be recollected, Franklin had procured the passage of a law, framed by himself, for raising a military force by voluntary enlistment; and had written and published a pamphlet, answering current objections to the measure, and commending it to the public approbation. On his return to Philadelphia he found the people, excepting the Quakers, very generally in favor of the new law, and companies enough enrolled and officered to form a large regiment. At a meeting of the officers of these companies, shortly after his return, they chose him for their colonel, and he accepted the station. The regiment mustered at its first review upward of a thousand men, rank and file, besides an artillery company over a hundred strong, with four brass field-pieces, which they soon learned to handle with dexterity and effect. At the close of the review they escorted their colonel home, and, in firing their salute, the field-pieces made such a concussion as to break several articles of glass belonging to his electrical apparatus. In relating these incidents, Franklin adds that his new honors proved not much less brittle, inasmuch as all

Franklin escorted by his Regiment.

their commissions were soon after vacated by the repeal, in England, of the law under which they were held.

The personal qualities and public services of Franklin, however, had won for him better and less brittle honors than any commission, even from his majesty of England, could confer. As a token of the esteem with which he was regarded, it may be mentioned that, while holding his colonelcy, having occasion to visit Virginia, his officers, to use his own words, "took it into their heads that it would be proper for them to escort him out of town as far as the lower ferry." For this purpose, just as he was about to mount his horse, they rode up to his door in full uniform, alike to his surprise and regret; for he had a strong repugnance to display, and if he had received beforehand the least intimation of what was intended, he would have avoided it. But it was now too late, and he was constrained to submit to the well-meant but annoying honor.

Some envious personal enemy of his wrote an account of this affair to Thomas Penn, who lived in London, and it served to impart new bitterness to the hatred with which the Proprietary already regarded Franklin, for the prominent part he had taken in the Assembly against exempting the proprietary estates in the province from taxation. Penn had even the effrontery not only to accuse Franklin to the ministers of the crown with being the chief obstruction to the king's service in the province, by opposing grants of money in proper form, and with the design to change the provincial government by force of arms—in evidence of which he cited the abovenamed escort—but he also endeavored, though ineffectually, to procure his removal as the head of the colonial postoffice department.

With Morris, the provincial governor, though bound, like his predecessors, by the instructions of the Propri-

etary, Franklin, notwithstanding the leading part he took in the Assembly in its disputes with that officer, continued personally on good terms; and the governor occasionally consulted with him in relation to public affairs. In the measures taken in aid of Braddock's expedition, they co-operated; and on hearing of its fatal issue, Morris instantly sent for Franklin, to confer with him on the means of protecting the back settlements. We have already seen with what ample powers Franklin was employed on the frontier; and after his return from that service, the governor offered him a general's commission, if he would, with provincial troops, undertake the same enterprise in which Braddock had so disastrously failed. In reference to this last proposal, Franklin, after a modest remark respecting his qualifications for military employment, intimates that the governor himself also probably expected less from him in that way than from his popularity as a means of raising the requisite force, and from his influence in the Assembly for obtaining funds. The project, however, was not pressed; and Morris was not long after succeeded by Governor Denny.

On the arrival of the new governor, in 1757, the city authorities of Philadelphia gave him a public dinner by way of welcome, and introduction to the principal citizens, with whom his station and character would naturally bring him into political and social connection; and he took the occasion to present to Franklin the gold medal voted him by the Royal Society in London for his discoveries in electricity and his eminent success in advancing that branch of knowledge. Governor Denny executed this commission on behalf of the society in appropriate terms of respectful eulogy; and after dinner, while the company generally were engaged with their conversation and wine, Denny, taking Franklin into an adjoining apartment, told him how strongly he had been

urged, in England, and how earnestly he desired, to cultivate his friendship and avail himself of his advice in relation to public affairs and the management of his administration; that he should cheerfully render him any service in his power; that nothing could more effectually promote the public good than harmony between the executive and the representatives of the people; that no person could exert a more efficient and wholesome influence in this way than he could; and that such a course would certainly be followed not only by the most hearty acknowledgments, but also by the most substantial benefits.

This conversation seems to have been skilfully conducted by the governor; but with all its well-worded assurances of esteem and future advantage, its true aim and intent were clearly perceived by Franklin, who promptly yet courteously replied that his circumstances, by the blessing of Providence, rendered him independent of proprietary favors, which, as a representative of the people, he could not in any event accept; that no feeling of personal hostility had at any time influenced his public conduct; that his opposition to the policy of the Proprietary had proceeded solely from his convictions as to the rights and true interests of the province; that if the measures proposed by the Proprietary or his deputies should be in accordance with his own views of justice and the public welfare, he should cheerfully and gladly give them his hearty and earnest support; and thanking the governor for his expressions of personal regard, intimated a hope that he was about to enter upon his administration unencumbered with the usual Proprietary instructions, which had been the real source of all those contests with the Assembly, that had been so annoying to preceding governors of the province, and had so much impeded the transaction of the public business.

Thus the interview ended; and though Governor Denny

then made no explanations on the last point, yet, as soon as his official duties brought him into contact with the Assembly, the old instructions made their appearance, reproducing the old controversies, in which Franklin took the same leading part as before—the principal reports and other documents of the Assembly being the productions of his practised and vigorous pen.

These official controversies, however, occasioned no personal animosity between the new governor and Franklin, nor any interruption of their social intercourse; and Franklin describes Denny as having been a man of letters, of agreeable conversation and manners, and well acquainted with the world.

The obnoxious instructions, with which the Proprietary obstinately persisted in fettering the discretionary powers of the governor, were so repugnant to all ideas of equal rights and the general welfare of the people, and interfered so seriously with the services which the Assembly were sincerely disposed to render to the sovereign, but which, under the instructions, they could not render without wholly abandoning the chartered privileges of their constituents, that they determined to remain no longer in such a position, but to petition the king for a redress of their grievances; and they fixed on Franklin as their agent to carry over their memorial and lay their complaints before his majesty

The immediate occasion of this step on the part of the Assembly was the rejection by the governor, acting under his instructions, of a bill for raising sixty thousand pounds for the king's use; of which the sum of ten thousand pounds was to be subject to the order of Lord Loudon, who had then recently arrived in the country, and superseded General Shirley as the commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces in America.

Franklin promptly made preparation for his departure;

and he had actually caused his sea-stores to be put on board of the packet at New York in which he was to sail, when Lord Loudon presented himself in Philadelphia, in the hope that he might, by his personal interposition, be able to reconcile the differences between the governor and the Assembly, and thus remove the chief impediment to the public service in the province of Pennsylvania. With this view, his lordship requested Governor Denny and Mr. Franklin to meet him and make him fully acquainted with the nature of the differences in question, and the state of the controversy respecting them. The proposed conference was accordingly held, and the whole matter discussed. Franklin presented a full view of the grounds taken by the Assembly, a brief sketch of which has already been given; while Governor Denny simply placed himself upon his instructions, together with the bond to obey them, which he, like his predecessors, had been constrained to execute to the Proprietary, and the forfeiture of which would utterly ruin him in point of property.

It speaks well for Denny's individual sense of justice and magnanimity, that, notwithstanding the critical and perilous position in which the penalty of his bond placed him, he seemed willing, as Franklin states, to encounter the hazard of its forfeiture, if the course of official action, which would expose him to it, should be advised by Lord Loudon. But though this disposition on the part of the governor raises a fair and strong presumption of the odious character of the Proprietary's instructions, still his lordship not only declined the responsibility of giving the advice suggested, but urged concession on the part of the Assembly, and entreated Franklin to exert his utmost influence to that end; declaring that, unless that body yielded, he would furnish no troops for the defence of their provincial frontier.

Franklin laid the whole matter before the Assembly, accompanying his statement, however, with a series of resolutions, drawn up by himself, setting forth the rights of the province, and declaring them suspended by force, against which they entered a solemn protest; and then, dropping the bill already passed and rejected, another bill, so framed as not to clash with the instructions, was passed by the Assembly and signed by the governor.

Thus, from the resources of his own mind, and through the legitimate influence he had acquired in the Assembly by his abilities and weight of character, Franklin arranged this difficult and troublesome affair in such manner as not to concede any provincial right, and at the same time enable the provincial authorities to meet the public exigency, now become, from the temper and movements of the Indians on the frontier, very pressing and full of danger to the back settlements.

But while thus detained at Philadelphia in performing a public service at once so arduous, patriotic, and loyal, the ship, in which he had engaged a passage for England, sailed, taking with it the stores he had provided for himself at no trifling expense, and for the loss of which his only compensation was thanks for his services from Lord Loudon, to whom nevertheless accrued all the reputation of adjusting the difficulties which occasioned the loss, and of putting the wheels of government again in motion — a very fair specimen of the sense of justice usually entertained by mother-countries and their great functionaries toward the native subjects of their colonial dependencies.

Lord Loudon, upon seeing the object of his visit to Philadelphia thus accomplished, returned immediately to New York; and in a day or two later Franklin followed, that he might take the next packet for England, which, as his lordship, to whose orders it was subject, had assured him would sail on the Monday then next to come.

Indecision and procrastination, however, were the most prominent features of Lord Loudon's character; and April, May, and much of June, went by, before the despatches he wished to send to England were ready, though promised almost daily during that long period; thus occasioning to Franklin not only great annoyance, but at least equal surprise that so inefficient a man should be intrusted with such high duties, as those which *then* pertained to the commander-in-chief of his majesty's forces in America. The character of Loudon, however, was soon understood by Pitt the elder, who then wielded the power of the British empire, and who, distinguished as he was for executive ability and vigor, could not long tolerate so dilatory and inefficient an agent, but speedily recalled him, to make way for the far abler and more active men, Lord Amherst and General Wolfe.

The character of Lord Loudon, as a public man, can not be more pithily described than it is in an anecdote related by Franklin. While lingering in New York as stated, he met a messenger from Philadelphia, named Innis, who had just come on with a packet from Governor Denny to Loudon, who told him to call the next morning for his answer. Two weeks after, Franklin again met Innis, and was told by him that he had called every morning on Lord Loudon for the promised reply, and it was not even yet ready. "Is it possible, when he writes so much, and is always at his desk?" said Franklin. "Yes," said Innis, "but he is like the St. George on the signs, always on horseback and never riding on."

At length, however, about the middle of June, the packet sailed, with Loudon's despatches and Franklin on board, and reached Falmouth, in the south of England, on the morning of the 17th of July, 1757. As the ship neared the English coast, at about twelve o'clock of the preceding night, she was, through the heedlessness

of the man on the lookout, in extreme peril of being wrecked on the rocks of Scilly, lying out in the sea off Land's-End, and suggesting the idea that they were once connected with that most southwesterly point of the English coast. The escape was narrow and the peril great; and the impression thereby made on Franklin's mind is abundantly evinced by the following passage from a letter to his wife, giving an account of the voyage, and written at Falmouth in the evening of the day on which he landed: "The bell ringing for church," says he, "we went thither immediately, and, with hearts full of gratitude, returned thanks to God for the mercies we had received. Were I a Roman Catholic, perhaps I should, on this occasion, vow to build a chapel to some saint; but as I am not, if I were to vow at all, it should be to build a lighthouse."

CHAPTER XXII.

GRIEVANCES OF PENNSYLVANIA — REMONSTRANCE TO PROPRIETARIES — MISREPRESENTATIONS EXPOSED — CAUSE PREPARED FOR HEARING — EXCURSIONS IN ENGLAND — FAMILY CONNECTIONS — CANADA — VISITS SCOTLAND — MR. STRAHAN — MARRIAGE PROPOSED — MISS STEVENSON AND HER STUDIES — POLITICAL ABUSE — PENNSYLVANIA'S SHARE OF INDEMNITY MONEY FROM PARLIAMENT.

Before entering upon the narration of Franklin's life and services in England, as the agent of Pennsylvania, it will be proper to give a brief view of the reasons for sending him thither. These reasons are well set forth in a report, dated the 22d of February, 1757, drawn up by himself as chairman of the Assembly's committee on grievances. They are founded on alleged violations of the grant made by King Charles II. to William Penn; of Penn's own charter based on that grant, and defining the forms of government under which the province was settled; of certain fundamental laws of the province made pursuant to that charter; and finally of some of the principles and provisions of the constitution and laws of the mother-country most essential to civil liberty and justice, and from the protection of which, British subjects, wherever dwelling, could not be rightfully excluded by the king or his grantees.

The royal grant, which was justly regarded by the colonists as the basis of the provincial constitution, and not to be violated or modified by the grantee or his suc-

cessors, gave to "William Penn, his heirs and assigns, and to his and their deputies," full power to make laws, "according to their best discretion, by and with the advice, assent, and approbation, of the freemen of the province or their delegates, for the good and happy government thereof," including "the raising of money, or any other end appertaining to the public state, peace, or safety," of the commonwealth thus to be constituted. This broad provision of the king's grant, it was held, precluded all those *instructions* which had occasioned so much trouble, controversy, and impediment to the public business, not only because it was absolutely binding on the deputy-governors as well as their principals the Proprietaries, but also because such instructions were wholly incompatible with that "best discretion" which they were bound to exercise, and this, too, in conjunction with the co-ordinate "advice, assent, and approbation," of the people of the province, as expressed by their representatives, in whom, it was maintained, the grant had vested "an original right of legislation, which neither the Proprietaries nor any other person could divest, restrain, or abridge, without violating and destroying the letter, spirit, and design, of the grant."

The obnoxious instructions, therefore, were a manifest encroachment on the vested rights of the people, as well as on the legal and proper discretion of the governor; and to such an extent had they restrained and abridged just legislation, that no bill to raise supplies for the public service, howsoever "reasonable, expedient, or necessary" it might be, for the welfare and protection of the province, could be made a law, unless on complying with the instructions by wholly exempting the estates of the Proprietaries from their equal rateable assessments — though they constituted by far the largest private interest in the province, and would be proportionately bene-

fited by its security, growth, and prosperity; while, by the laws of England, "the rents, honors, and castles, of the crown," though not the private property of the person wearing the crown, were actually taxed and paid "their proportion of the supplies granted for the defence of the realm and the support of the government;" and while the sovereign and his nobles, as well as all other tax-paying inhabitants of England, were thus indirectly but really contributing "their proportion toward the defence of America," including Pennsylvania, it was held to be "in a more especial manner the duty of the Proprietaries to pay their proportion" of the taxes required for the preservation of their own provincial estates. The exemption of those estates, therefore, was declared to be "as unjust as it was illegal, and as new as it was arbitrary."

It was further urged that, by virtue alike of the royal grant and of the colonial charter framed by Penn himself, the provincial Assembly, when convened and acting as a legislative body in its provincial sphere and for its legitimate purposes, was as fully endowed with all the powers and privileges of such a body as the English House of Commons, possessing the incontestable right of granting supplies and laying taxes "in any manner they may think most easy to the people, and being the sole judges of the measure, mode, and time," of so doing; but that the instructions of the Proprietaries, nevertheless, tended directly and manifestly to subvert all those rights and privileges, especially in assuming arbitrarily to control the action of the Assembly in framing and passing bills for raising money, so as to render that body, even if it should forego its just powers and the rights of its constituents, absolutely unable to raise the supplies requisite for the defence and welfare of the province.

Another prominent ground of complaint was the con-

dition of the judiciary. Under the original charter framed by William Penn, the judges of the courts of record held their offices during good behavior; but this independent tenure had latterly been changed, and the judges now held only during the pleasure of the Proprietaries or their deputy-governors. The alleged consequence was, that the "judges being subject to the influence and direction" of those who gave them their commissions, the laws were "often wrested from their true sense to serve particular purposes; the foundations of justice became liable to be destroyed; and the lives, laws, liberties, privileges, and properties of the people, rendered precarious and insecure."

The enlistment, by the officers of the king's regular troops in the colonies, of immigrant servants bound for a specific term of years to their masters, was also presented as a heavy grievance, inasmuch as it "not only prevented the cultivation of the land, and diminished the trade and commerce of the province," but was rendered peculiarly odious by its unequal operation; for there was no general regulation for an impartial distribution of the burden, and the servants were impressed into the army, not only against the consent of their employers, but without making the latter any compensation for the loss of those services for which they had paid and of which they were thus forcibly deprived.

The Proprietaries, moreover, had pursued a most odious policy in another respect. Although the expense of the treaties with the Indians for the cession of their lands and for the regulation of intercourse with them, was borne by the province, yet the choicest of those lands were monopolized by the Proprietaries. This ground of complaint was not included in Franklin's report to the Assembly, and was not, indeed, technically illegal; for it had, with crafty foresight, been provided

at an early day that all bargains by individual colonists with any of the Indians for the purchase of lands, if made without the consent of the Proprietaries, should be utterly void, while the Proprietaries themselves were not subjected in this particular to any restriction. This monopoly on their part, however, grew into such an abuse as greatly increased the odium against them, and served to extend and strengthen the general repugnance to the whole scheme of their government.

Besides these complaints against the conduct and administration of the Proprietaries and their instructed deputies, the province had another weighty grievance to complain of as resulting from the action of the king. By the original grant to William Penn, though the laws passed by the provincial legislature were ultimately to be submitted to the king in council, and if there rejected were to become void, yet five years were allowed for making such submission, and meanwhile the laws became immediately operative in the province. This provision in the grant was introduced, not to enable the king and council to control the internal policy of the province, but simply to keep the royal government informed thereof, and secure the allegiance of the provincial authorities and people. Latterly, however, instructions from the king's ministers, as well as from the Proprietaries, had been sent out, prohibiting a certain class of laws from taking effect, if passed, until *after* they had received the sanction of his majesty in council. This prohibition was aimed particularly against the enactment of laws authorizing the creation of bills of credit to be used in the province as a circulating medium; and it was felt to be a serious injury to the business of the people, as well as a plain encroachment upon their chartered rights; for this paper currency, in the very great scarcity of hard money produced by the nature and condition of the commerce

of the colonies with the mother-country, had been of very great benefit to all branches of the internal trade and agriculture of the province, and its credit had been thoroughly sustained by the prudent and well-devised means provided, in every act authorizing the issue of such bills, for redeeming them.

Such was the nature of the principal grievances of which Pennsylvania complained, and from which Franklin was commissioned on behalf of the province to apply for relief. The most prominent among them, at the period in question, was that which grew out of the instructions given by the Proprietaries to their governors respecting taxation, and which, in the exigencies produced by war, was well fitted to exasperate the public mind. Franklin was accordingly directed to present himself, in the first instance, to the Proprietaries, and endeavor by personal conference to induce them to relinquish their claims to the exemption of their provincial estates from taxation, and abandon the policy which had occasioned so much controversy, had so much obstructed the proper administration of public affairs, and rendered themselves and their government so odious. To this end he carried with him a formal remonstrance from the Assembly; and in case they should persist in repelling the claims thus urged upon them, then a petition, with which he was also furnished by the Assembly on behalf of the province, was to be laid before the king in council, asking for relief of a broader kind, covering the whole list of grievances, and extending to a thorough reform of the provincial government, in accordance with the provisions and spirit of the original charter and with the recognised and true principles of the British constitution.

Falmouth, as we have seen, was the port at which Franklin reached England, and he proceeded thence by land to London, where he arrived on the evening of July

26, 1757. At the invitation of his friend Collinson he went in the first instance to the house of that gentleman, where he was hospitably entertained till he could procure suitable permanent lodgings. Such lodgings he shortly after found at the house of Mrs. Stevenson, No. 7 Craven street; and they proved so convenient, comfortable, and every way pleasant, that he made his home there during all his long subsequent residence in London, embracing, in the two missions on which he was sent thither, about fifteen years. That house, says Dr. Sparks, is noted to this day, in the London guide-books, as "the house in which Franklin resided."

Not long after his arrival in London, however, he was seized with intermittent fever, brought on by a violent cold. It appears from a letter to his wife, dated the 22d of November, 1757, that at the beginning of the preceding September he had, as he thought, nearly recovered; but on going out again, perhaps imprudently, he had taken another cold, upon which the fever returned with increased violence, accompanied by fits of pain in his head, continuing "seldom less than twelve hours, and once thirty-six," of such extreme severity as to produce at times delirium; and when they went off, leaving the top of the head "very sore and tender." He was most assiduously and kindly nursed by the family with which he had become domesticated, and he received from his physician, the celebrated Dr. Fothergill, (a Quaker, and in later years a zealous advocate of conciliation with the American colonies,) all the attention and aid that medical skill, rendered vigilant by the warmest friendship, could bestow. The disease, after about eight weeks, went off with a fit of spontaneous vomiting and diarrhœa; and as some of the circumstances connected in this case with the termination of this most distressing malady are somewhat strongly marked, it may be useful to state them,

on the authority of the patient himself, a little more particularly. That great remedy, the Peruvian bark, in those days, when chemistry had not yet presented its virtues in a better form, was administered both "in substance and infusion;" and Franklin had taken so much of it, that he "began to abhor it." Notwithstanding the condition of his stomach, from which this abhorrence of the bark proceeded, he "dared not take a *vomit* for fear of his *head*." Nature, it seems, however, had no such fear: for he was taken one morning with a fit of *spontaneous* and thorough *vomiting*, followed immediately by a diarrhœa, recurring at short intervals during the greater part of the day. The effect was decisive. He considered it, to use his own words, "a kind of crisis to the distemper, *carrying it clear off;* for ever since I feel quite lightsome, and am every day gathering strength. So I hope my seasoning is over, and that I shall enjoy better health during the rest of my stay in England."

Notwithstanding the prejudices Franklin had to encounter in the outset of his career in philosophy, his reputation had long stood high in England, and still higher on the continent, where the value of his philosophical researches had been at once acknowledged; and the attentions he received from men of science and other eminent individuals, both personally and by correspondence, served to relieve even the tedious weeks of sickness and convalescence; and when he regained his usual health, his intercourse with people of this class constituted his chief gratification, and added greatly to the esteem with which he was personally regarded.

Attractive as this intercourse was to him, however, as soon as his recovery was sufficiently confirmed to enable him prudently to engage in business, he lost no time in waiting upon the Proprietaries, Thomas and Richard Penn, and laying before them the objects of his mission.

The manner in which they received him, and the pertinacity with which they insisted on their claim to interpret their powers in their own way, without reference to the views of his constituents, soon convinced Franklin that no just arrangement of the controversy could be effected with them, and that he should not only be constrained to invoke the interposition of a higher authority, but that in making this appeal he would have to encounter the most strenuous opposition from the Penns, and be obstructed by every impediment they could place in his way; to say nothing of the prejudices of the king and his ministers in behalf of executive prerogative in every form, and their habitual jealousy of colonial privileges and all claims grounded upon them.

This latter prejudice had been brought to bear upon Pennsylvania with peculiar weight, by the intrigues and misrepresentations of the Proprietaries. They had been so uncandid and dishonest as to represent that those difficulties in the way of raising supplies for the public service in that province, which their own instructions to their governors had occasioned, had arisen solely from a factious and aggressive spirit on the part of the people and their representatives, who, it was urged, only made their unwarrantable complaints against the Proprietaries a pretext to cover their disloyalty to the crown. The public journals, moreover, were used to disseminate these misrepresentations; and such was the effect they had produced on public sentiment in England, that Franklin deemed it necessary to expose them through the same channels. This he did in a very able letter, under the signature of his son, (whom he had taken to England with him,) addressed to the publisher of the paper in which the grossest and most abusive of the misrepresentations had appeared; though it should be mentioned, as a further proof of the malice and falsehood of his adver-

saries, for the insertion of the letter he was compelled to pay.

The charges, which exhausted the patience of Franklin, and called forth this communication, were professedly grounded on letters from Philadelphia, stating that, while the Indians were desolating the back settlements of the province, the Assembly, and especially the Quakers, were engaged in factious quarrels with the governor, and would grant no supplies for defence, unless by such bills as the governor could not approve without sacrificing the rights of the Proprietaries and violating his allegiance to their common sovereign. Franklin's reply thoroughly exposed these calumnies. He showed what had been done for the protection of the frontier, in building forts and raising troops; that the settlers were themselves also abundantly supplied with arms and ammunition, which they well knew how to use; that the Assembly, since the commencement of the very war then waging, had raised more than one hundred thousand pounds for military purposes, besides the large sums required for the support of the provincial government and other civil objects; that an armed ship had been employed at the expense of the province as a cruiser on the coast; that the Quakers, though non-combatants from religious scruples, constituted only a small portion of the whole people, and that, so far from combining to resist the acts of the Assembly for the common defence, they had in various instances resigned their seats in that body and kept aloof from public affairs on account of their principles; and finally, that all the real obstacles to the vigorous and successful management of the public concerns of the province, and to the security and welfare of the people or any portion of them, were in truth created by the unjust, arbitrary, and unconstitutional instructions, with which the Proprietaries trammelled their governors.

The statements of this able and honest document were so full and clear, showed so perfect a knowledge and mastery of the subject, drew the attention of leading men so effectually to the whole case, and made so strong an impression, that no public reply to it was attempted. The Proprietaries, nevertheless, continued obstinate and unyielding. The remonstrance from the Assembly remained unanswered, frivolous pretexts for delay were invented; and at the end of twelve months, nothing having been accomplished, Franklin set about taking the necessary steps to bring the matter before the privy council. To do this, however, much time was required, as the case, in the first instance, had to go for a hearing before the board of trade, and having there been argued by counsel on both sides, would be sent up, in the form of a report, with the opinion of that body upon it, to the council. If no relief should be obtained in that way, Parliament was then to be petitioned for redress.

In this state of things, all that Franklin could do was to put the counsel, who were to argue the cause on the part of the province before the board of trade, in full possession of the facts and papers belonging to the case, together with such views and instructions as he deemed proper; and having done so, as there was every likelihood that more than sufficient time for preparation would elapse before the hearing could be had, he availed himself of the opportunity thus forced upon him by the delay of his business, to extend his acquaintance with men of worth and distinction, to visit interesting places, and to see such objects as were worth a visit and within his reach. In writing to his wife on the 21st of January, 1758, he tells her that he is likely to be detained a full year longer, in order to accomplish his business effectually; and he then adds: "You may think, perhaps, that I can find many amusements here to pass the time agree-

ably. It is true the regard and friendship I meet with from persons of worth, and the conversation of ingenious men, give me no small pleasure; but at this time of life, domestic comforts afford the most solid satisfaction, and my uneasiness at being absent from my family, and my longing desire to be with them, make me often sigh in the midst of cheerful company."

Among the labors performed by Franklin himself, or with the assistance of others through his procurement and instructions, and designed to aid the cause of the province, not merely before the board of trade and the privy council, but also in the larger view in which it was to be presented to Parliament, should that last resort become necessary, was the preparation of an elaborate work entitled "An Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania." This performance, extending through four hundred and fifteen octavo pages, is grounded on the original charter from the king; the frame of government prepared by William Penn pursuant to that charter, and under which the settlement of the new colony commenced; certain fundamental laws accompanying that frame of government, and intended to define its powers and the rights and duties of the colonists more in detail; the modifications of the government during the life of Penn; the more important acts of the Assembly and the Proprietaries or their governors after the death of the founder; and public documents, votes, and proceedings of the Assembly, down to the time of Franklin's mission.

In those days, the department of the British government, now in charge of the colonial secretary, was managed by the board of trade; and the work just mentioned seems to have grown, at least in part, out of some suggestions made to Franklin by Robert Charles, an able lawyer, long resident in London as the general agent of

Pennsylvania, and well informed of the sentiments of the British ministry and the state of public opinion in relation to the colonies; for Franklin, in a letter dated the 10th of June, 1758, to Isaac Norris, speaker of the Assembly, referring to Mr. Charles, writes as follows: "One thing that he recommends to be done before we push our point in Parliament, is to remove the prejudices that art and accident have spread among the people of this country against us, and to obtain for us the good opinion of mankind out of doors. This I hope we have it in our power to do, by means of a work, now nearly ready for the press, calculated to engage the attention of many readers, and efface the bad impressions received of us; but it is thought best not to *publish* it till a little before the next session of Parliament."

The work, accordingly, was prepared, in 1758, from materials supplied by Franklin, and under his immediate direction and supervision, but was not published till early in 1759. The aim of this performance, the materials of which it was composed and which included much documentary matter from his own pen while in the Assembly, and the vigor with which it was executed, together with the circumstances and time of its appearance, were all such as to lead the public very naturally to assign the authorship of it to Franklin. This opinion, too, was busily propagated by the Proprietaries and their dependents in both England and Pennsylvania; for he was the great champion of the popular cause, and they hoped to weaken that cause by directing against him the whole weight of prevailing prejudices, especially among leading men in England. Franklin, however, was not the author, in the usual acceptation of the term. This fact is expressly declared in a letter dated the 27th of September, 1760, to David Hume, in which he writes as follows: "I am obliged to you for the favorable sentiments you express

of the pieces sent to you; though the volume relating to Pennsylvania affairs was not written by me, nor any part of it, except the remarks on the Proprietary's estimate of his estate, and some of the inserted messages and reports of the Assembly, which I wrote when at home, as a member of committees appointed by the house for that service. The rest was by another hand."

The person to whom Franklin refers, is supposed by many to have been his old acquaintance, James Ralph, whom he had again met in London, very much improved in condition, and who, having early relinquished his pursuit of poetry for history, and politics, had become a writer of considerable eminence, and was from the circumstances of their early connection as well as his occupation at the time in question, very likely to have been the person referred to.

Having thus taken all the preliminary steps in his power to prepare the cause of the province, for the hearing before the board of trade, as there was every likelihood that even more than sufficient time for that preparation would elapse, before the hearing could be had, he availed himself of the opportunity thus forced upon him, by delays which he could not prevent, to extend his acquaintance with distinguished men, who courted his society, and to visit such places of interest and objects worth seeing as were within his reach. Much of the summer of 1758, therefore, he passed in making excursions in different directions in England, accompanied by his son. In May he went to Cambridge, some forty to fifty miles north of London, and the seat of one of the two great English universities. Referring to this visit in a letter to his wife, dated June 10, 1758, he says: "We stayed there a week, being entertained with great kindness by the principal people, and shown all the curiosities of the place; and returning by another road to see more of the country,

we came again to London." He found this jaunt beneficial to his "health and spirits," and on returning to London, finding that "all the great folks were out of town, and public business at a stand," he determined to avail himself of the invitation he had received while at Cambridge, to attend the annual commencement at that university, which was to take place early in July. "We went accordingly," says he, in the letter just cited, "were present at all the ceremonies, dined every day in their halls, and my vanity was not a little gratified by the particular regard shown me by the chancellor and vice-chancellor of the university, and by the heads of the colleges."

When the commencement was over, instead of returning to London, he went into Northamptonshire taking his son with him, to look up his family connections. In Wellingborough he found an aged cousin, "daughter and only child of Thomas Franklin," his father's eldest brother. She was five years older than his father's oldest child, Elizabeth, (Mrs. Dowse,) being therefore, in 1758, eighty-six years old, but she well recollected her and her father's removal with his family, then consisting of his first wife and three children, to Boston, in 1685. "I knew she lived at Wellingborough," says Franklin to his wife, "and had married there to one Richard Fisher, a grazier and tanner, about fifty years before, but having had no correspondence with her for about thirty years, did not expect to see either of them alive, and so inquired for their posterity." He was, however, directed to their house, where he found both the husband and wife very infirm from their great age, but very glad to see their American cousins. They had a competent estate and lived in comfort. Their only child, a daughter and never married, had died at the age of thirty years. Mrs. Fisher gave Franklin some of his uncle Benjamin's letters, and much information respecting the other

brancnes of the Franklin family. One of these he afterward found in London. She was the "daughter of his father's only sister, very old and never married," but a kind and good woman, and though poor, very cheerful and contented.

Franklin next went to Ecton, about four miles from Wellingborough, and the place where his father was born, and where his ancestors had resided from time immemorial. The first object of his search was the old homestead. It passed to Mr. Fisher with his wife, but he had sold the property. The land had been united to another farm; and in the old stone house, still called "the Franklin house," a school was kept. He also visited the rector of the parish, who received him kindly, and showed him the old registers of the church, where he saw the records of the births, marriages, and deaths of his ancestors, back to the commencement of the register, two hundred years before. The graveyard, too, contained many memorials of the family, some of which were "so covered with moss that we could not read the letters, till a hard brush and a basin of water were brought, with which they were cleaned, and his son copied them." The rector's wife, "a good-natured, chatty old lady," told him various anecdotes of his uncle, Thomas Franklin, (the father of Mrs. Fisher,) who was "a conveyancer, clerk of the county courts, and clerk of the archdeacon to whose jurisdiction the parish belonged; a very leading man in all county affairs, and much employed in public business." It was through the enterprise of this active and public-spirited man that the village-church was furnished, by a subscription set on foot by him, with a chime of bells, and his relatives from across the Atlantic now had the gratification of hearing them play. He had also devised a method of protecting the meadows about Ecton from the injury they had often

suffered from the freshets of the river which runs through the village; a method still in use at the time of this visit. The method is not described; but when first proposed, said the rector's wife, though the villagers could not conceive how it could answer the purpose, yet they agreed that, "if *Franklin* says he knows how to do it, it will be done." In short, it appears that Thomas Franklin's counsel was sought in relation to most local matters, whether public or private, if they presented any difficulty, and "he was looked upon by some," said the narrator, "as something of a conjurer;" and even cabinet-ministers did not disdain to weigh his opinions sometimes in respect to points of domestic policy. This Thomas Franklin, whose character seems to have presented not a few traits of resemblance to that of his illustrious kinsman, died exactly four years, to a day, before that kinsman was born. So strong was the resemblance of character just mentioned, that Franklin, in the introductory part of his autobiography, quotes a remark of his son, who, upon listening to this account of Thomas, said to his father, "Had he died four years later, on the same day, one might have supposed a transmigration."

In a letter to his favorite sister, Mrs. Jane Mecom, written a few days after the one to his wife, from which the preceding incidents are derived, Franklin refers again to his visit among his kinsfolk in England, and speaks particularly of a *cousin* Jane, one of his uncle John Franklin's daughters, who had been wife to Robert Page, but had died the year before. Mr. Page, however, was living, and had in his possession a number of letters to his wife from her uncle Benjamin, between whom and his brother Josiah, Franklin's father, there was an unusually strong attachment, and who, following that brother to America, had lived for some years in his

family. Those letters were given to Franklin. In one of them, dated at Boston, July 4, 1723, the writer, referring to Mrs. Mecom, then a little girl, says that his brother Josiah had also a Jane, "a good-humored child;" and Franklin, after playfully enjoining it upon his sister to "keep up to her character," goes on to speak of some advice from his uncle Benjamin, who was a man of sincere piety, to his niece Jane in England. The advice accompanied a religious book he sent her, and was in the form of an acrostic upon her name, Jane Franklin. It was, in substance, an exhortation to cultivate the Christian graces of faith, hope, and charity, which were typified, in the quaint manner of those days, under the figure of a house of three stories. Franklin copies the acrostic for his sister, "for namesake's sake, as well as the good advice it contains," and then appends to it a very characteristic comment, from which the following passages are taken:—

"After professing truly," says Franklin, "that I had a great esteem and veneration for the pious author, permit me a little to play the commentator. The meaning of the *three stories* seems somewhat obscure. You are to understand, then, that *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, have been called the three steps of Jacob's ladder, reaching from earth to heaven. Our author calls them *stories*, likening religion to a building, and these are the three stories of the *Christian edifice*. Thus, improvement in religion is called *building up*, and *edification*. *Faith* is, then, the ground-floor, and *hope* is up one pair of stairs. My dearly beloved Jenny, do not delight to dwell too much in those lower rooms, but get as fast as you can into the third story, for in truth the best room in the house is *charity*." Again: the author had written, very likely from the scantiness of his poetical vocabulary, "Kindness of heart by *words* express"—on which the comment runs thus:

"Strike out *words* and put in *deeds*. The world is too full of compliments already. They are the rank growth of every soil, and choke the good plants of benevolence and beneficence; nor do I pretend to be the first in this comparison of words and actions to plants. You may remember an *antient poet*, whose *works* we have all studied and copied at school long ago—

'A man of *words* and not of *deeds*,
Is like a garden full of *weeds*.'"

In the conclusion of this playful and yet earnest and affectionate letter, he does not forget his aged half-sister, Mrs. Dowse, but requests that Mrs. Mecom would read to her the account of their connections in England, which would be sent to her by his wife for their gratification.

In making these inquiries concerning his kindred, and tracing these various currents of consanguinity, however obscurely they might be flowing along the humbler or more retired ways of life, Franklin was gratifying one of the strongest propensities of his kindly nature; one which pervaded his whole being; which not only constituted an essential ingredient of his own happiness, but rendered him peculiarly dear to his familiar friends; which, in its various manifestations and wider influences as a social principle, led him to regard nothing human as alien to his heart, and without which, human life can be little better than a dreary and cheerless waste; which spread over his manners and general deportment so attractive a charm, that, wherever he mingled in society, or engaged in correspondence and personal intercourse of any kind, even with the most eminent, whether in birth and station, or in the pursuits of science, added to the respect and deference he commanded for his abilities and acquirements as a philosopher and a sage, the warmer sentiment of esteem and friendship for him as a companion and a man.

Besides his excursions to different parts of England, Franklin, during the delay of the business of his mission, gave some portion of his time to his favorite electrical inquiries; and he paid, also, not a little attention to the leading political questions of the day and the policy of the government. The war with France was not only still going on, but was waged with greater vigor than ever, under the active administration of Pitt the elder, that great minister applying to its prosecution everywhere, by land and sea, in Europe, India, and America, the whole resources of the empire, with all the energy of his character, and with a success corresponding to the power of mind and of military force brought to bear upon it. The deep interest of the British colonies in continental America, in the results of the war, was the topic which chiefly engaged Franklin's thoughts, and he was particularly solicitous that the government should turn its best efforts to the conquest of Canada. He regarded that conquest as the blow which, of all others, would not only be most deeply and permanently felt by France, but especially, also, as the most expedient, not to say the only way, in which the safety, peace, growth, and lasting prosperity of the North American colonies of Great Britain could be secured. With a powerful enemy, like France, continually pressing on the frontiers of the colonies, commanding the great channels of internal trade on the lakes and rivers, and controlling the sentiments and the power of most of the Indian tribes, the colonial settlements could not, except by very slow degrees, be extended westward much beyond their then existing bounds, but would be kept perpetually in a state of alarm and insecurity inconsistent with their prosperity. They would thus not only be far less valuable to the mother-country, but would also make it necessary to expend more upon the means of protecting them, than the

conquest of the enemy, on that side, would cost, and which, when once accomplished, would remove both sources of expenditure, and leave the colonies perfectly competent to protect themselves, to secure the friendship of the Indians, and enjoy exclusively the advantages of an extensive and profitable trade with the tribes; and by opening a clear field for the enterprise of the inhabitants, contribute largely to their own prosperity, and, through that, to the commerce of Great Britain.

To promote his views on this point, Franklin not only made it the topic of conversation, in his general intercourse with society, whenever an opportunity presented itself, but he sought, for some time, to obtain a personal interview with the great premier, in the hope of impressing his mind with the importance of the proposed policy so thoroughly as to induce him to adopt and carry it into effect with his characteristic promptitude and energy. Though he did not succeed, at that time, in obtaining the desired conference with Mr. Pitt, yet his efforts to that end were not wholly fruitless, inasmuch as they brought him into personal intercourse with the minister's under-secretaries, through whom his views, with more or less fullness and force, reached the minister himself.

In the very interesting paper addressed to his son in 1775, giving an account of a series of interviews and correspondence between himself, the earl of Chatham, Lord Howe, David Barclay, and others, held in 1774, in the hope of falling upon some mode of effecting a reconciliation with the colonies, Franklin, referring to the abovementioned topic, and the failure of his endeavors to obtain an interview with Mr. Pitt, makes the following remarks: "I was obliged to content myself with a kind of non-apparent and unacknowledged communication through Mr. Potter and Mr. Wood, his secretaries, who seemed to cultivate an acquaintance with me by their

civilities, and drew from me what information I could give relative to the American war, [that is, the bearing of the war with France on the American colonies, and British interests as connected therewith,] with my sentiments on measures that were proposed or advised by others, which gave me the opportunity of recommending and enforcing the utility of conquering Canada."

The policy of fighting France on the side of Germany, which had been so much favored by the kings of the reigning family, themselves of German origin, Franklin objected to, on the ground that it was ineffectual to produce any lasting advantages to Great Britain, even if victorious, or any real and permanent diminution of the power and influence of France; that it was really fighting the battles of other European nations, who reaped all the benefits, while Britain paid the cost; and it was a policy which Pitt himself had never really approved. The harmony of their views on this point may well be supposed to have inclined the minister to Franklin's opinions respecting Canada, and the importance of wresting it from France, as the most effectual if not the only mode in which her power could be materially and permanently weakened, to the real benefit of his own country. At all events, Franklin's views respecting the conquest of Canada were adopted; and there is good reason for affirming, that the expedition of Wolfe, and the acquisition of both territory and renown, which it brought to the British empire and the British arms, are to be ascribed to the political sagacity of Franklin.

The year 1759 passed on without bringing Franklin's provincial mission to a close, though the historical exposition of the affairs of Pennsylvania, together with the conversation and character of Franklin, and other means of rectifying opinions in high places, as well as among reading and reflecting men generally, were producing

their legitimate effect, and rendering important aid to his professional counsel in preparing his cause for a hearing. As that hearing, however, did not yet come on, Franklin availed himself of the summer of that year to visit Scotland, taking his son with him. He had, in the preceding February, received from the university of St. Andrew's the honorary degree of doctor of laws, and his merits, not only in physical philosophy and in politics, but as a man of general knowledge and an elegant and forcible writer, having been long well understood, he was received with cordial respect by the eminent men of Scotland. David Hume, Henry Home, (better known as Lord Kames,) and Dr. Robertson, the historian, became his warm personal friends, as his subsequent correspondence with them abundantly testifies. At Edinburgh, in September, he was "admitted a burgess and guild-brother of that city," says the city record, "as a mark of affectionate respect for a gentleman, whose amiable character, greatly-distinguished usefulness, and love to all mankind, had long ago reached them across the Atlantic ocean;" and in October the freedom of the city of St. Andrew's, also, was conferred upon him.

Of all the great men whose society he enjoyed in Scotland, the warmest personal attachment seems to have sprung up between himself and Lord Kames. They were congenial spirits; and when, after spending a number of delightful days at his lordship's country-seat near the Tweed, Franklin left Scotland for London, his noble friend and lady accompanied him through the first stage of his journey. The kind and degree of pleasure he found in the society of Lord Kames is vividly described in a letter written at London, on the 3d of the succeeding January, 1760. After expressing the regret of himself and his son at parting with him and Lady Kames so soon, he says: "How much more agreeable

would our journey have been, if we could have enjoyed you as far as York. We could have beguiled the way by discoursing on a thousand things, that we now may never have an opportunity of considering together; for conversation warms the mind, enlivens the imagination, and is continually starting fresh game that is immediately pursued and taken, and which would never have occurred in the duller intercourse of epistolary correspondence. So that whenever I reflect on the great pleasure and advantage I received from the free communication of sentiment, in the conversations we had at Kames, and in the agreeable little rides to the Tweed-side, I shall for ever regret our premature parting."

Of the gratification he found in the whole of his sojourn in Scotland, he speaks, in the same letter, as follows: "On the whole, I must say I think the time we spent there was six weeks of the *densest* happiness I have met with in any part of my life; and the agreeable and instructive society we found there in such plenty, has left so pleasing an impression on my memory, that, did not strong connections draw me elsewhere, I believe Scotland would be the country I should choose to spend the remainder of my days in."

One of Franklin's most intimate personal friends in London, was Mr. William Strahan, bred a printer, who acquired a handsome fortune in his business, and, by his talents, intelligence, and probity, became, in 1775, a member of Parliament. He had long taken a lively interest in the affairs of the American colonies, and when the controversies and estrangements came on between those colonies and the mother-country, he took an active part in all the efforts made to heal difficulties and bring about a reconciliation. Shortly after Franklin's arrival in London, in 1757, Mr. Strahan had, with Franklin's privity, written a very earnest invitation to Mrs. Frank-

lin to visit London with her daughter, during her husband's stay on the business of his mission; and now, in the winter of 1759–'60, his increased regard for Franklin led him to urge the latter to send for his family and settle permanently in England. Among the inducements to this step, Mr. Strahan proposed the marriage of his son with Franklin's daughter, Sarah; and he put the proposal in writing, together with the various considerations in its favor, that it might, if his friend thought fit, be sent to Mrs. Franklin at Philadelphia.

From Franklin's letter of March 5, 1760, to his wife, on this subject, it appears that Mr. Strahan's business enabled him "to lay up a thousand pounds every year," clear of family expenses and all other charges; that his wife was "a sensible and good woman;" the children amiable and well trained; and "the young man sober, ingenious, industrious," and personally agreeable. Franklin's objections, as stated in conversation with his friend, to settling in England, were his "affection to Pennsylvania and to long-established friendships and connections there, and his wife's invincible aversion to crossing the seas;" while, without the removal to England, he "could not think of parting with his daughter to such a distance." Thanking his friend for the esteem implied by the proposals, but not promising to communicate them, he nevertheless did so, leaving his wife "at liberty to answer or not;" requesting for himself, however, the knowledge of her sentiments on the subject.

Among the friendships Franklin formed in England, at the period in question, one of the most interesting was that with Miss Mary Stevenson, the daughter of his hostess of Craven street. Her character was one of high moral worth, and she was gifted with uncommon mental abilities. Upon Franklin's becoming an inmate of her mother's family, he soon perceived her various merits,

and took pleasure in aiding and directing her studies. In the spring of 1760, she resided for some time with a relative, at a little distance from London, and during that separation she and her distinguished friend exchanged several letters, relating chiefly to her course of reading. One of those letters contains suggestions on that topic, which most readers, particularly youthful ones, would find it advantageous to observe. He advises her to read "with a pen in hand," and to "enter in a book," suitably prepared for the purpose, "short hints," or abstracts, of whatever she might find striking, whether "curious or useful," as the best method of fixing them in her mind, either for subsequent use, if practically valuable, or, if relating to things rare and curious, "to adorn and improve her conversation;" and, moreover, always to have good dictionaries at hand, for the instant explanation of words not perfectly understood, particularly terms of science and art, so that no part of the author's meaning may be lost, or knowledge rendered defective, and the mental perceptions impaired, by any confusion of ideas.

This advice is believed to be sound; and the method of making "short hints," or condensed abstracts, in the reader's own language, much better than that of the usual common-place book, to which passages are transferred in the very words of the author. The former practice may be rendered an efficient mode of mental discipline, promoting the habit of discriminative and accurate thinking, and so strengthening the memory as well as the understanding; while the latter method, though occasionally well for the convenient preservation of passages remarkable for some felicity of expression, or other quality of mere form, seems unsuited for any purpose of mental training; and though sometimes recommended as a mode of cultivating the memory, it seems less fitted

to aid that faculty, than to injure it by accustoming it to rely on the common-place book rather than its own power of retention.

Franklin's zeal in behalf of the claims of Pennsylvania, and the ability with which he maintained them, excited a rancorous hostility on the part of the Proprietaries and their retainers; and to this was added on the part of others, the high tory advocates of royal prerogative and adversaries of colonial privileges, another confluent current of bitter feeling against him, for the ability and effect with which he maintained those privileges and the general cause of the colonies. From these two sources proceeded not a few political pamphlets and newspaper articles, in which, from time to time, he was assailed with gross personal abuse, and his motives, purposes, and habits, calumniously misrepresented. These things, however, gave little disturbance to his equanimity. He was content with the approval of his own conscience and the respect and friendship of the men most eminent in either South or North Britain for worth and abilities, and regarded this personal obloquy with cool indifference or silent scorn. Writing from London to his wife, in June, 1760, he says: "I am concerned that so much trouble should be given you by idle reports concerning me. Be satisfied, my dear wife, that while I have my senses, and God vouchsafes me his protection, I shall do nothing unworthy the character of an honest man, and one that loves his family." In another letter he says: "Let no one make you uneasy with their idle or malicious scribblings, but enjoy yourself and friends, and the comforts of life that God has bestowed on you, with a cheerful heart. I am glad their pamphlets give you so little concern. I make no other answer to them at present, than what appears on the seal of this letter."

That answer was, a dove above a snake coiled and darting forth its tongue, with a motto in French, signifying that — *Innocence surmounts everything.*

In the autumn of this year, (1760,) Franklin received a letter from Isaac Norris, Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, accompanied by an act authorizing and directing him, as provincial agent, to receive and invest, on behalf of the province, its share of the moneys recently granted by parliament as some indemnity to the American colonies for the charges they had incurred in 1758, beyond what that body admitted to be their fair proportion, in support of the war. In the act making this grant, the Lower Counties (as they were then usually called, now the state of Delaware) were joined with Pennsylvania, though they were under separate governments. The number of men kept in the field by the two governments was 2,727, the quota of Pennsylvania being 2,446, and that of Delaware 281. The whole sum apportioned to the two colonies, was twenty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-three pounds sterling, of which Pennsylvania's share was nearly twenty-seven thousand pounds, and that of Delaware a little over three thousand.

On receiving this money, Franklin placed it in the bank of England, till he could invest it in stocks, as he soon did, pursuant to the law under which he acted. The investment was well made; but the Assembly, moved by some premature rumors of peace, indiscreetly ordered the stocks to be sold when so low as to occasion considerable loss; and yet the Penn party, in their rancor toward Franklin, charged the loss to his misconduct, and claimed that he should make it up.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PAMPHLET ON CANADA — PENNSYLVANIA CASE DECIDED — TOUR IN ENGLAND AND WALES — NEW WORDS — NATURAL HISTORY — PHILOSOPHICAL TOPICS — TOUR IN HOLLAND — ART OF VIRTUE — LATENT HEAT — WATER VAPORIZED BY ELECTRICITY — POINTS AND KNOBS — ARMONICA — LITERARY HONORS — RETURN HOME.

Before the close of 1759, the conquest of Canada had been achieved, and the island of Guadaloupe been taken, by the British. These events in America, with the success of the British arms in East India, and the overwhelming superiority of the British navy, were followed by indications of approaching peace; and the terms on which that peace should be concluded began to occupy the thoughts of leading men both in and out of the British cabinet.

In this condition of public affairs, a pamphlet appeared, addressed in fact to the duke of Newcastle, then premier, and Mr. Pitt, one of the secretaries of state, but published under the title of a *Letter to Two Great Men*, and written by the earl of Bath, better known as Mr. Pultney, in which he urged that, whatever concessions might be made in other quarters, on the conclusion of peace, Canada should be retained by Great Britain. A reply to this letter soon after came out, anonymously, entitled *Remarks on the Letter to Two Great Men*, in which the writer maintained that Guadaloupe would be the more valuable acquisition, and should be retained, while Canada should be restored to France.

The *Remarker* was supposed by many to be the celebrated Edmund Burke; and whether the supposition was correct or not, it was good evidence that his performance was deemed an able one. Having, from a desire not to seem obtrusive, waited a suitable time for a reply from the author of the *Letter*, Franklin took up the subject. In one respect, if no more, he was better qualified to discuss it than either of the other writers, or, indeed, any man in England; and that was, his more precise and thorough knowledge of all the material facts pertaining to the state of things in America; of the resources, wants, progress, and prospects of the colonies; their relations to Canada and to the Indian tribes; the features of the country already occupied by the colonial settlements, as well as the regions which would invite occupancy as soon as new settlements could be made with a reasonable expectation of security; the extent of the Indian trade, and its value, together with that of the colonies, to the mother-country; and, in short, all the peculiarly American topics bearing on the question. In reference, also, to the more general topics, whether drawn from history or from the relations of Great Britain to the other countries of Europe, or to the Indies East and West, wherever the commercial interests of the British empire were involved, he showed himself to be at least as well informed as any man, whether in or out of the public councils, who undertook to discuss the question, in either its commercial or its diplomatic bearings; and he handled it with an ability and pungency, and at the same time with a courtesy and fairness, which drew from an opponent, in another anonymous pamphlet, written doubtless, though not avowedly, by the *remarker*, a declaration that he considered the author of the *Canada Pamphlet*, as being of all the advocates of the retention of Canada, "clearly the ablest, the most ingenious, the

most dexterous, and the most perfectly acquainted with the strong and weak points of the argument," and as having "said everything, and everything in the best manner, that the cause could bear."

A brief sketch of the general scope and tenor of this performance, is all that can be here given; but this, at least, is demanded by justice to its author, not only to illustrate the attitude he then presented, and the estimation in which he was then held, as a public man, but also in connection with other evidence subsequently furnished from time to time, as the interests and rights of the American colonies grew in importance, and became more and more deeply affected by the policy of the mother-country, to aid in showing something of the extent to which those principles, whereon the colonies at last took their stand in opposition to that policy, and the arguments by which those principles were unfolded and enforced, are traceable to Franklin, and to the influence he exerted on opinion both in England and in America.

The question discussed in the pamphlet before us, let it be remembered, was, which of her two conquests, the island of Guadaloupe, or the province of Canada and its dependencies, Great Britain should retain. Franklin commences with a compliment to the ability and courtesy of the two preceding writers, and an apology for his taking up the discussion, drawn from "the long silence" of the author of the *Letter*, followed by some well-placed observations on the importance of the question at issue, and the wisdom of thoroughly canvassing it, without delay, in order that the government might be prepared, with clear and well-settled views in regard to it, to enter on the negotiations by which it would be decided at the close of the war.

The first point relates to the right of a nation, on the

successful termination of a just war, to demand cessions from its enemy, by way of indemnity for the expenses forced upon the former, and for the future security of any exposed part of her dominions. This right is illustrated by various examples from history and modern treaties between the European states; and the wisdom of insisting upon it in the case under consideration, is enforced by a striking statement of the nature and extent of the colonial frontiers and the Canadian territory, the relations between them, the position and character of the Indian tribes, the influence exercised among them by French missionaries and traders, and the whole French policy in Canada and Louisiana; all which considerations demonstrated the necessity of retaining Canada, in order to avoid future wars with their heavy expenditures, from causes arising in that quarter, and to insure the safety and prosperity of the colonies and their value to the mother-country.

The second point relates to the insufficiency of the method insisted on by his opponent and usually pursued, of block-houses and forts, however strongly garrisoned, or however judiciously placed, to defend a frontier nearly two thousand miles in length, covered with vast primeval forests, swarming with savage tribes familiar with every part of them, and threading them in every direction, in small bands, moving with a celerity that baffled any possible effort of regular troops to pursue them, or even to discover their trail, unless by accident, and spreading desolation and terror through the new settlements. Such military posts would, indeed, be of some service for guarding particular passes, and covering a few places here and there threatened by the regular troops of the enemy, and were of still greater use as *dépôts* of provisions and warlike stores, but were utterly ineffectual to protect the general frontier, or prevent those border en-

croachments and quarrels that would be perpetually occurring in such remote regions and embroiling the two nations; whereas the retention of Canada "implied every security," and would at once and for ever cut off all hazard of future wars between France and England, from causes originating in that seed-bed of hostilities, which, if restored, would become more and more fruitful, demanding a continually-increasing military establishment and a rapidly-augmenting expenditure. If Canada be retained, says Franklin, "we shall then, as it were, have our back against a wall; the seacoast will be easily protected by our superior naval power; and the force now employed in that part of the world may be spared for other service, so that both the offensive and defensive strength of the British empire will be greatly increased."

The third point relates to "the blood and treasure spent in America," by the mother-country, which the *Remarker* had said was expended only in the cause of the colonies. This notion, a very prevalent one both then and afterward, Franklin met with a full and clear exposure of its fallacy and injustice. He did not pretend that the colonies were "altogether unconcerned," for their people were then warmly attached to the mother-country; and they not only took pride in her glory and prosperity, in peace and war, but had "exerted themselves beyond their strength and against their evident interest," in her behalf. But their loyalty "had made against them;" and for no better reason than the fact, that the battles of Great Britain had been fought in America, the allegation had been made that the colonists were "the authors of a war, carried on for their advantage only." No individual and no public body of any kind, in the colonies, had any individual or separate interest in the retention of Canada; they wished for no lands but those they already possessed, and for no con-

quests, except only for the sake of peace and security within their own borders. Indeed, so far as their pecuniary interests, in this particular, were concerned, the acquisition of additional territory would be a detriment, by bringing more land into market, and thus contributing to retard the growth of their existing settlements. The mother-country, on the contrary, had a direct and substantial interest in this increase of territory and cheap lands, through the influence it would necessarily exercise in restricting the inhabitants to agriculture as their great occupation; and thus, by enlarging the demand for the manufactures of the mother-country, nourish her commerce and navigation, and augment her wealth and her naval power.

Besides, it was unjust and invidious, for another reason, to represent the blood and treasure spent in the war, as being spent in the cause of the colonies only. The colonies were, in truth, but part of the frontiers of the empire; and, so long as they preserved their allegiance, had as perfect a claim to protection as any county in England. The acquisition of Canada was not sought to gratify "a vain ambition" on the part of the colonies, as the *Remarker* had insinuated; it was sought for the benefit of the whole empire, and such would be the result of retaining it. Should the kingdom engage in a war for the protection of her manufacturing and commercial interests, would it be just or decent to charge "the blood and treasure" expended in it, to the account of "the weavers of Yorkshire, the cutlers of Sheffield, or the button-makers of Birmingham"?

Under the fourth head, the argument in favor of the extension of the colonial settlements toward the Mississippi and along the great lakes, and the advantages that would result to the mother-country from their vast increase of population and general prosperity, is expanded

and enforced with peculiar ability and the exhibition of the most statesmanlike views. The *Remarker* had objected that the interior of that broad territory could not be reached for the purposes of trade to the benefit of Great Britain, and that its population, soon ceasing to have any intercourse with the mother-country, would become useless if not dangerous to her interests. In reply, it is shown that the objection proceeded from ignorance of the character of that country and the remarkable facilities furnished by its rivers and lakes for an internal trade of greater extent, activity, and productiveness, than any other region of the earth. In illustration of this point, reference is made to the trade, long carried on, for British account, in the most interior parts of Europe, against great natural difficulties, and the still greater embarrassments arising from the clashing legislation of numerous states; and a comprehensive and masterly view is added of the various routes of commerce through Asia and Europe in ancient and modern times. The Indian trade, also, is adduced to show that, in point of fact, that interior was actually traversed in every direction, and that the canoe was but the precursor of the larger craft destined to swarm on those unrivalled waters. It is thus demonstrated that, while the colonial population would be spreading westward, the manufactures of England, with whatever merchandise her ships might bring, would certainly follow the people, who would adhere to agriculture as their main occupation, till those vast and fertile regions should be brought under cultivation; that manufactures could not naturally grow up in such a country, inasmuch as the population would be too sparse for that, while land was cheap; that the climate and soil were so varied as to invite the cultivation, not only of food of every kind in the greatest abundance, but of a wide variety of raw products for

manufacture in England; that the result to Great Britain would be a rapid increase of numbers, wealth, arts, and power, on her own soil, as well as in her colonies; a navigation that would cover the seas, and a navy to ride with it round the world.

Compared with such vast benefits to the mother-country, the natural fruit of the permanent possession of Canada, and of the consequent security and growth of the American colonies, all that the possession of Guadaloupe could promise was insignificant indeed; and as to the danger of disaffection and separation on the part of the colonies — a point much magnified on the other side — it was but imaginary, so long as the imperial government should be administered with ordinary justice and discretion, and the charters of the colonies, together with their local laws and usages for the regulation of their own internal concerns, should be respected. The policy of ancient Rome, in this particular, was an example of wisdom worth imitating. She left the countries she subdued to their own institutions, independent of each other and tranquil, so long as they preserved their allegiance to her. In pursuance of this policy, she went even so far as to release the Grecian states from the Macedonian yoke, and give them their separate independence and their own laws, not retaining even the appointment of their governors. Rome, by this magnanimous and therefore wise policy, not caring for the ostentatious but irritating parade of sovereignty, enjoyed the trade of the dependent nations, received their tribute, and swayed the world, without a standing army, until "the loss of liberty and the corruption of manners in the sovereign state subverted her dominion."

But the policy of the *Remarker* would leave Canada to the French, to check the dangerous growth of the American colonies. "A modest word, this *check*," says

Franklin—"for the massacre of men, women, and children." To restore Canada on such ground, would be to invite the French and their savage allies to renew their barbarities, and the stain of such blood-guiltiness would rest on Britain. Better than this would be the Egyptian policy of old, to strangle at its birth every male-child born in the colonies. But the danger of separation, and the narrow jealousy which suggested the policy of restoring Canada, was idle and unjust, except only on the supposition of "the most grievous tyranny and oppression" on the part of the mother-country. "People," says Franklin, "who have property to lose, and privileges to be endangered, are generally disposed to be quiet, and to bear much, rather than hazard all. While the government is mild and just—while important civil and religious rights are secure—such subjects will be dutiful and obedient. The waves do not rise but when the wind blows."

This able pamphlet concludes with a statistical exhibit of the commercial value of Guadaloupe and the colonies, demonstrating the superiority of the latter, and showing that, if tropical produce and trade were to be the controlling objects, the possession of Guadaloupe was far less desirable than that of French Guyana and Cayenne, on the neighboring mainland of South America, which, from the small number of the French there, could be much more easily occupied by a British population, and held more quietly under British authority, than Guadaloupe, fully peopled as it was by the French, who would always be disposed to throw off the jurisdiction of foreigners and return to their original, natural connections.

Such is an imperfect outline of this able, enlightened performance. It exerted a very extensive and powerful influence on the public mind, and unquestionably contributed much to shape the course of the ministry in

conducting those negotiations, which ended in obtaining Canada and peace. The consequences amply sustained the views of Franklin, and fully vindicated his sagacity, in everything, except the justice and moderation of the British government; and that single exception could not have been made, had George Grenville, Lord North, and their respective colleagues, manifested, in subsequent years, half the true statesmanship of the provincial agent of Pennsylvania.

At length, in June, 1760, the cause committed to Franklin's charge by the Assembly of Pennsylvania, was argued before the board of trade. The particular case on which the argument was had, was an act of the Assembly, duly signed by Governor Denny, entitled, "*An act for granting to his majesty the sum of one hundred thousand pounds, striking the same in bills of credit, and sinking the bills by a tax on all estates real and personal.*" This included, of course, the Proprietary estates; and though the decision of the board required some few formal amendments of the act, for the sake of greater precision in some of its details, yet, on the great point, it was explicit, that the estates of the Proprietaries ought to be assessed and taxed in the same manner and to the same extent as all other estates in the province.

Though the hearing took place in June, yet the report of the whole matter, with the decision thereon by the board, to the privy council, together with other formalities appertaining to it, detained Franklin in London, as he remarks in a subsequent letter to Lord Kames, until the middle of September.

Although the leading object of Franklin's mission to England was now accomplished, yet other affairs of the province kept him still in that country; and during a short period of leisure following the attainment of the object mentioned, he made another excursion, with his

son, to the northern parts of the kingdom, taking a route somewhat west of his former one to Scotland, and returning through Wales. Writing at Coventry, under date of the 27th of September, to Lord Kames, he states that he had intended, when the excursion was originally planned, in the preceding summer, to cross over to Ireland, and having made the tour of that island, pass from one of its northern ports into the southwest of Scotland, and so make a circuit to Edinburgh, for the sake of once more seeing his friends in that neighborhood; but that the litigation with the Proprietary had delayed him so long in London, as already stated, that he was obliged to relinquish the more important part of his design.

In a letter to David Hume, of the same date, Franklin expresses the gratification it had given him to learn that Mr. Hume's opinions concerning America had recently become more favorable than they had been; for, says he, "I think it of importance to our general welfare, that the people of this nation should have right notions of us; and I know of no one who has it more in his power to rectify those notions, than Mr. Hume." That distinguished writer had then recently put forth his able *Essay on the Jealousy of Commerce;* and Franklin, in the same letter, expresses the pleasure it had given him, particularly for the following reason: "I think," says Franklin, "it can not but have a good effect in promoting a certain interest, too little thought of by selfish man, and scarcely ever mentioned, so that we hardly have a name for it: I mean the *interest of humanity*, or the common good of mankind. But I hope, particularly from that essay, an abatement of the jealousy, that reigns here, of the commerce of the colonies."

The change in some of Mr. Hume's sentiments relating to America, as mentioned above, had been produced, in great part at least, by the *Canada Pamphlet,*

which Franklin had sent him; and it seems, from the letter already cited, that Mr. Hume, in another referring to it, had, with the frankness of friendship, criticised some of the expressions employed in the pamphlet. Among these were the words *pejorate*, *colonize*, and *unshakable*. After thanking his friend for his admonition, and saying that he should give up the words, for the reason that they were not recognised by usage, he admits the position that new words should not be coined, when there are already old ones sufficiently expressive; but he adds the wish that usage would give a readier sanction to new terms, formed by compounding such as already belong to the language and are universally understood; and he refers to the German, as well as the Latin and Greek, to sanction the practice; remarking, that words compounded of such as are already familiar, would be better than any that could be borrowed from other tongues, inasmuch as their full meaning would be instantly and completely apprehended.

Much of this we believe to be sound doctrine, if cautiously applied. Still, Franklin's modesty, or courtesy, led him, we think, to defer to Mr. Hume's authority somewhat beyond the true rule. Not that we would ask the mint-stamp on *pejorate;* for, to cite but one example, having *deteriorate*, the other seems needless, though equally legitimate in its formation, each being originally derived from the comparative degree of a Latin adjective, the old word through the French, the other directly from its Roman primitive. As to *colonize*, however, it is not only in common and unquestioned use, in these days, by the best writers, but it was so, long before the year 1760; probably as long before as the condition and political relations of communities called colonies were understood by Englishmen, or the planting of them was the subject of discourse in the English language;

and in its vocabulary there is not a word more regular and legitimate, in form or use.

We do not intend to enter, here, into a philological dissertation; but it may be allowable to remark, that, when the progress of knowledge and of society produces new facts and truths, or new institutions, then the very design and end of all language demand new words to express the new ideas, and to discourse with clearness and precision concerning the new subjects of thought. In this way it is that the vocabularies of all tongues have been extended; and all that sound principle requires is, that the new terms shall be formed in accordance with the established laws of the language to which they are added. Even when subjects of thought, not essentially and strictly new, are placed in unusual relations, and new terms, if not absolutely indispensable, become desirable, for the more exact, forcible, or graceful expression of the ideas suggested by the varied aspects of the subject, the languages of all civilized nations have freely admitted them, not from caprice, nor even for convenience alone, nor only for the yet higher purpose of giving style new attractions by giving it a more varied power of expression, or an easier flow, but also as being both the instruments and proofs of greater accuracy of thought and increasing intellectual culture; and this augmentation of the means of communicating ideas is one of the processes, perhaps the most efficient one, by which the civilization and refinement of nations are advanced.

During his residence in London, though he was unable to give any systematic attention to philosophical studies, yet he availed himself of occasional opportunities furnished by the delay of his business, to perform an experiment, or attend a meeting of professed cultivators of science, or write to a correspondent on some topic of his favorite pursuit. In June of 1758, he addressed such a

letter to John Lining, of Charleston, South Carolina, a correspondent of that class, on the cooling of the surfaces of bodies by evaporation. This topic had been started before Franklin left home on his present mission; and in the letter now mentioned, he relates an experiment he had recently exhibited at Cambridge, in conjunction with Professor Hadley, of the university there, in which, by successive wettings of the glass bulb of a thermometer with ether, and permitting each wetting to evaporate, as it rapidly did, being aided by blowing on the bulb with a pair of bellows, the mercury in the tube was sent down twenty-five degrees below freezing point, and ice. nearly a fourth of an inch thick, was formed on the bulb, "From this experiment," says Franklin, "one may see the possibility of freezing a man to death, on a warm summer-day, if he were to stand in a passage, through which the wind blew briskly, and were wet frequently with ether, a spirit more inflammable than brandy, or common spirits of wine."

The principle thus demonstrated Franklin applies, as his habit was, to various cases of practical importance. Many a person has received great injury to his health, from seeking, when much heated and wet with perspiration, to refresh himself in such a passage, by having his body too rapidly cooled down by evaporation from its surface. On the other hand, by this same law of nature, the husbandman, while gathering his harvests in the field under a burning sun, is protected from a heat that would overpower him, if it were not carried off by evaporation from his perspiring body. On the same principle, water, milk, butter, or anything else, may be cooled in vessels wrapped with cloths, wetted often enough to keep up an active evaporation; and so, too, local inflammation on the human body, whether occasioned by bruises, boils, or other hot tumors, may be cooled, and pain diminished,

by laying on linen kept wet with spirit, which is better than water, for this purpose, because it evaporates faster.

In the summer of 1760, in several interesting letters to Miss Stevenson, then at Wanstead, a little distance from London, Franklin explains, for her instruction, the action of tides in rivers, both the flow and ebb taking place in the form of tidal waves, the top of each wave, that is to say, high-water, reaching successive places at successive points of time, so as to make the surface of the river present, in fact, a succession of curves. In another of these letters, speaking of inquiries into the character and habits of insects — a study to which his young friend was devoting part of her time — he illustrates the utility of such inquiries, by references to the honey-bee, the cochineal insect, the silk-worm, and other instances; and relates the method which the great Swedish naturalist, Linnæus, suggested, for protecting the green timber in the dockyards of Sweden from a worm by which large quantities had been materially injured. Linnæus having detected the origin of the worms from eggs deposited in the small crevices in the surfaces of timber, and the fly which deposited the eggs, and having ascertained accurately the period when the eggs were deposited, recommended that, some days before the commencement of that period, all the green timber should be placed under water till the period had passed by. The timber was thus secured from injury, in that form, by pursuing the course recommended, only once with the same timber; for the process of seasoning rendered the timber, by the next year, too hard for the worm to penetrate. Though the utility of this, as well as other branches of natural history, is thus explicitly recognised by Franklin, yet he felt that there was a certain fitness, or propriety, which should regulate the attention to such pursuits, according to individual position and the pres-

sure of other obligations; and he closes with the following admonition, for the sake of which, in part, the letter has been cited: —

"There is, however," says Franklin, "a prudent moderation to be used in studies of this kind. The knowledge of nature may be ornamental, and it may be useful; but if, to attain an eminence in that, we neglect the knowledge and practice of essential duties, we deserve reprehension. For there is no rank in natural knowledge, of equal dignity and importance with that of being a good parent, a good child, a good husband or wife, a good neighbor or friend, a good subject or citizen —that is, in short, a good Christian. Nicholas Gimcrack, therefore, who neglected the care of his family, to pursue butterflies, was a just object of ridicule, and we must give him up as fair game to the satirist."

During his journeys in England and Scotland, Franklin took occasion to inquire, among other things, into the condition of their hospitals, with a view to the benefit of the hospital which he had helped to establish and manage in Philadelphia; and in replying, under date of February 26, 1761, to Hugh Roberts, a co-manager of that institution, he informs him that he should send, by the same ship that would take his letter, various transcripts of regulations and accounts given him at different English and Scotch hospitals, from which useful hints might perhaps be taken in regard to management and expenditure; and that he hoped to obtain some contributions of money. His friend was also a member of the Junto, and in his letter had spoken of his attending the meetings of the club occasionally. Franklin replies that he should do it oftener; that the members all loved and respected him; that "people are apt to grow strange and not understand one another so well, when they meet but seldom;" that for himself, he loved cheerful com-

pany as well as ever, while at the same time he enjoyed with a higher relish "the grave observations and wise sentences" of the conversation of cheerful old men, ripe with experience.

Being still detained in England, he took an opportunity, in the summer of 1761, to visit Holland and Flanders. No account of this visit remains, except a brief letter to his wife, dated at Utrecht, September 14, 1761, in which he tells her that, "having seen almost all the principal places, and the things worthy of notice, we [he and his son] are on our return to London," where he intended to arrive in time to witness the coronation of George III. He adds: "We are in good health, and have had a great deal of pleasure, and received a good deal of information in this tour, that may be useful when we return to America."

In January, 1762, Franklin, in answer to a written request from Mr. Hume, wrote him a minute description of the manner in which lightning-rods should be made and attached to buildings. In his reply, dated the 10th of May following, Mr. Hume, after expressing his thanks, and referring to some other matters, pays the following tribute to Franklin's worth and eminence: "I am very sorry that you intend soon to leave our hemisphere. America has sent us many good things, gold, silver, sugar, indigo, &c.; but you are the first philosopher, and indeed the first great man of letters, for whom we are beholden to her. It is our own fault that we have not kept him; whence it appears that we do not agree with Solomon, that wisdom is above gold; for we take care never to send back an ounce of the latter which we once lay our fingers upon."

In March of the same year he received a letter from his wife, announcing the death of her mother, Mrs. Read, at a very advanced age. The following passage from

Franklin's reply, will give another illustration of the ready sympathy and warmth of his affections: "I condole with you most sincerely," says he to his wife, "on the death of our good mother, being extremely sensible of the distress and affliction it must have given you. Your comfort will be, that no care was wanting on your part toward her, and that she had lived as long as this life could afford her any rational enjoyment. It is, I am sure, a satisfaction to me, that I can not charge myself with having ever failed in one instance of duty and respect to her, during the many years that she called me son;" and after a passing reference to the time of his return home, he adds, "God grant us a happy meeting."

Writing to Lord Kames, under a little earlier date, to thank him for a work entitled *Introduction to the Art of Thinking*, originally written by that nobleman for the benefit of his own children while pursuing their early studies, and sent by him, on its publication, to Franklin, the latter, in his reply, makes the following remarks: "To produce the number of valuable men necessary in a nation for its prosperity, there is much more hope from *early institution* than from *reformation*. And, as the power of a single man, in particular situations of influence, to do national service, is often immensely great, a writer can hardly conceive of the good he may be doing, when engaged in works of this kind." He then refers again to his long-meditated work, (an outline of which has been presented in a former part of this book,) on the *Art of Virtue*, declaring that "it is not a mere ideal work;" that having "first planned it in 1732," he had made use of it himself, and induced others to do so, with beneficial effect; that he had been accumulating materials for it, from time to time, ever since; and that he intended to avail himself of his "first leisure" to complete it, on his return to his own country. But the demand

of the public for his services, growing more urgent as their value became more apparent, the pressure of public business, instead of allowing him the leisure he had hoped for, became more engrossing than ever, and this long-meditated plan was never executed.

His own view of the need and the probable usefulness of such a work he explains in the letter just cited, by saying, substantially, that there are many persons whose lives are unprofitable, or pernicious, not so much from any settled wickedness of motive, or systematic design, as from accident and ignorance — from not comprehending, in season, the necessary tendencies of early habits, or their own power to control and reform bad habits; that such persons would willingly, as the long list of their broken resolutions show, have persevered in the endeavor to become upright and respectable men, useful to themselves, their families, and society, if, in addition to precept, they had been shown *how* to obey the precept — if the rules and principal details of right conduct had been placed distinctly before them, so that they might know precisely the particular acts they were to do every day, and which, when done, would constitute a well-spent day; that this process is virtually the same as that which is followed in training men to every one of the mechanical arts, and all other practical occupations. If a man, as he says, would become a painter, navigator, or architect, it is not enough that he is *advised* and *convinced* that it would be for his advantage to be one; but he must be also taught the particular principles of his art, as well as its *methods* of *working*, and especially the use of his tools by *actually handling* them every day, for a series of years, till he shall have acquired the *habit* of handling them skilfully and successfully. So, the *art of virtue* is a *practical* matter, and has its appropriate instruments, and manner of employ-

ing them; and, to use his own words, "to expect people to be good, just, temperate, and so forth, without *showing* them *how* to *become* so, seems like the ineffectual charity mentioned by the apostle, which consisted in saying to the hungry, cold, and naked, '*Be ye fed, be ye warmed, be ye clothed,*' without showing them how they could get food, fire, or clothing."

The want of time to execute such a work as Franklin had thus conceived and would have produced, is, we think, to be regretted. When, on the one hand, we consider with what power prevalent usages and manners act on personal habits and character — how deeply the general tone of thought and feeling abroad in society affect individual views of duty, and of the true ends of life — how few, especially at the early age when only can much effect be ordinarily expected from any method of moral training, have sufficient intelligence, or self-directing power, to frame or follow a plan of self-discipline comprehending the whole of life and such an employment of their faculties and opportunities as may warrant a reasonable expectation of any considerable amount of beneficial results — and how many, therefore, encounter life piecemeal, as it were, running a career of unconnected efforts and isolated enterprises, and exhibiting, at the close, a saddening spectacle of energies wasted, and talents producing no permanently-valuable results, simply for the want of well-defined and consistent aims; and then, on the other hand, when we reflect on the method contemplated by Franklin, for assisting the youth of each generation to train themselves to both virtuous habits and consistent action, in plying their various callings and pursuing the lawful objects of life — when we reflect on these things, and advert to the rich experience, varied observation, and profound sagacity, from which the rules and lessons of his work

would have been drawn, we can not resist the conviction that the fulfilment of the design in question, would have presented a method of self-examination and self-discipline more thoroughly practical, in both form and spirit, as well as more efficient in producing beneficent results, by its influence on manners, habits, motives, conduct, and the general well-being of private and domestic life, than anything of the same class and design that has yet been furnished.

Among Franklin's cotemporaries, one of the most enlightened and successful experimenters in electricity, was Ebenezer Kinnersley, of Philadelphia, an old friend and correspondent. In a long letter, dated at London, February 20, 1762, replying to a similar one, on electrical topics, Franklin confirms the experiments of his friend, showing that glass, which, at the ordinary temperature, is one of the most perfect non-conductors of electricity, is rendered permeable by it, when expanded by heat; and in the same letter Franklin broaches the idea that all bodies contain a specific quantity of heat, or caloric, diffused through their substance, and varying in amount according to density and arrangement of parts, but quiescent and not affecting sensation, till excited and evolved by some external agency — an idea since proved to have been well founded, and the basis of what has been designated as the theory of *latent heat.* He was led to this idea by simply considering the manner of obtaining heat and fire by rubbing together two pieces of dry wood, by hammering metals, and by the sudden and forcible collision of flint and steel; facts which, though so long known, seem never before to have suggested any philosophical induction.

The fact that even a small amount of electrical fire, as obtained in the laboratory, yields heat enough to convert water into vapor, is also communicated in the same let-

ter. The way in which he detected this fact, he relates as follows: "Water reduced to vapor is said to occupy fourteen thousand times its former space. I have sent a charge through a small glass tube that has borne it well while empty, but, when filled first with water, was shattered in pieces and driven all about the room. Finding no part of the water on the table, I suspected it to have been reduced to vapor; and was confirmed in that suspicion afterward, when I had filled a like tube with ink and laid it on a sheet of clean paper, whereon, after the explosion, I could find neither any moisture nor any sully from the ink." He then suggests that this fact may explain the effects sometimes produced by lightning on trees when they are reduced, by the stroke, to "fine splinters like a broom; the sap-vessels being so many tubes containing a watery fluid, which, when reduced to vapor, rends the tubes lengthwise." He adds: "Perhaps it is this rarefaction of the fluids in animals killed by lightning, or electricity, which, by separating its fibres, renders the flesh so tender and apt so much sooner to putrefy;" and that "much of the damage done by lightning to walls of brick or stone may sometimes be owing to the explosion of water lodging upon them or in their crevices."

Notwithstanding the full and clear expositions Franklin had long before given, of the different electrical action of *knobs* and *points*, yet some of the few electricians of reputation then possessed by England still maintained that lightning-rods terminating upward with knobs were better protectors than pointed ones, for the alleged reason that "points *invite* the stroke." To this he replied that, although points draw the electrical fire at greater distances than knobs, "in the *gradual* and *silent* way," yet that an *explosion*, or violent *stroke*, in which the *danger* lies, is drawn farthest by the *knob*, as

experiments had undeniably demonstrated. The above-named fallacy is adverted to in the letter to Mr. Kinnersley; and in an earlier letter to M. Dalibard, of Paris, Franklin, referring to that and other fallacies, observes that his views respecting these rods seemed to have been extensively misconceived, and the principles from which they derived their protecting power only half understood; that their more common and valuable effect resulted from the very fact objected to by the *knob-men*, inasmuch as the *point* usually disarmed the thunder-cloud, by silently drawing its electricity from it to such an extent as to prevent explosion, and yet, also, in case of explosion, it conducted the formidable element certainly and safely to the ground. "Yet," says he, "whenever my opinion is examined in Europe, nothing is considered but the probability of those rods *preventing* a stroke or explosion, which is only a *part* of the use I had proposed for them; and the *other* part, their *conducting* a stroke which they may happen not to prevent, seems to be totally forgotten, though of equal importance and advantage."

Among the many good gifts Franklin had received from the "Former of his body and Father of his spirit," was an uncommonly fine ear for music; and this, acting on the mechanical faculty, which he also possessed in liberal measure, led him to devise and construct a new musical instrument, of which he gave a minute and full description, in a letter, dated at London, July 13, 1762, to the celebrated Italian philosopher, John Baptist Beccaria, who not only translated his papers on electricity, but defended his doctrines on that subject, and with whom he corresponded for many years. The particular occasion which suggested this trial of his mechanical dexterity and skill in music, was the delight he had taken in listening to some performances on the instru-

ment, then recently introduced among the musical circles, called the *musical glasses.*

Some years before, an Irish gentleman, by the name of Puckeridge, having often observed "the sweet tone that is drawn from a drinking-glass by passing a wet finger round its brim," conceived the idea of arranging a number of glass goblets, so varied in size and thickness as to yield the notes of the common gamut in regular succession, and so firmly secured, each by its foot, on a table or frame, as to be readily reached and touched by the performer. To aid in tuning these glasses, water, in such quantity as might be needful, was poured in. The house in which the inventor resided, unfortunately taking fire, he, with his instrument, was consumed. A Mr. Delaval, however, an ingenious man, and a member of the Royal Society, having seen and heard the musical glasses, made another instrument, with a better chosen set of glasses; and this was the first one that came to the notice of Franklin. "Being charmed," says he, "by the sweetness of its tones and the music produced from it, I wished only to see the glasses disposed in a more convenient form, and brought together in a narrow compass, so as to admit a greater number of tones," by increasing the number of glasses.

After various trials, in both the form of the glasses and the mode of arranging them, he finally adopted a set of glass bowls or hemispheres, thirty-six in number, regularly diminishing from a diameter of nine inches for the largest to three inches for the smallest one, and diminishing, also, in thickness, from nearly an inch at the centre to about the tenth of an inch at the brim, for the largest, and so in proportion for the others; all arranged upon an iron spindle, tapering to suit the size of the glasses, and passing through sockets of cork, fitted in the openings at their centres, the largest glass being

placed first on the spindle, the next in size placed next, and so far within the first as to leave about an inch of rim projecting, and accessible to the finger; and so, in regular succession of sizes, and due proportion in all respects, with the others. All the glasses being thus adjusted, the spindle, projecting a few inches at each end, was laid horizontally upon brass gudgeons fitted to a frame, supported by four legs, and covered with a mahogany case, opening and shutting like that of a pianoforte. At the larger end, outside of the gudgeon and the case, the spindle presented a square shank, to which was fitted a wheel connected with a treadle under the case, by means of which the performer turned the spindle and its glasses with his foot, just as a spinner turns her wheel. A good deal of grinding and polishing was necessary to bring the glasses into perfect unison; a cup of water and a sponge were provided, for the performer to wet his fingers from time to time; and, in order to bring out the finest tones, the glasses were to turn *from*, not *toward*, the ends of the fingers.

At the close of his long and minute letter to Beccaria, from which we have taken only such particulars as were necessary to give an idea of the instrument, and the ingenuity displayed in its construction, Franklin, speaking of its merits, says: "Its tones are incomparably sweet beyond those of any other; they may be swelled and softened at pleasure, by stronger or weaker pressures of the finger, and continued to any length; and the instrument being once well tuned, never wants tuning again;" and he adds: "In honor of your musical language, I have borrowed from it the name of this instrument, calling it the *Armonica*."

Among the latest public testimonies received by Franklin, during his present sojourn in England, of the high estimation in which he was held, was the degree of doctor

of laws conferred upon him, in April, 1762, by the university of Oxford. His son, also, received at the same time the degree of master of arts; and was, moreover, just before his father sailed for America, appointed, by the king in council, governor of New Jersey. This appointment was procured through the influence of the earl of Bute, who was then the favorite minister of the young king George III., and who was moved on the occasion, it is supposed, by his physician, Sir John Pringle, one of the elder Franklin's friends and correspondents. From a letter to the governor of Pennsylvania, written a few months after, by Thomas Penn, it appears that the latter cherished some expectation that this appointment of the younger Franklin would moderate, if not remove, his father's opposition to the Proprietary policy in Pennsylvania; for in that letter he says: "I am told you will find Mr. Franklin more tractable; and I believe *we* shall, in matters of prerogative, as his son must obey instructions, and what *he* is ordered to do, [in Jersey,] the *father* can not well oppose in Pennsylvania." It seems to have been difficult for this Proprietary to comprehend the character of a man whose public conduct was guided solely by his sense of justice and his convictions of duty. At all events, Franklin adhered to his principles as steadfastly as ever, and continued to be the trusted champion of the rights of the people of Pennsylvania, and the object of the bitterest hostility of the Proprietary and his unscrupulous partisans.

Before leaving England, Franklin wrote his farewell to Mr. Hume, Lord Kames, and other eminent friends in Scotland. In his letter to the former, written on the 19th of May, he returns the compliment respecting *wisdom* and *gold*, by referring to the unparalleled plenty of gold and silver in Jerusalem, in the time of Solomon, as a type of the abundance of wisdom in Britain; and

closes with the expression of his regret, to use his own words, "at leaving a country in which he had received so much friendship, and friends whose conversation had been so agreeable and so improving to him." In his letter to Lord Kames, written at Portsmouth, on the 17th of August, he says: "I am now waiting here only for a wind to waft me to America; but I can not leave this happy island and my friends in it, without extreme regret, though I am going to a country and a people that I love. I am going from the old world to the new; and I fancy I feel like those who are leaving this world for the next — grief at the parting, fear for the passage, hope of the future. These different passions all affect the mind at once, and they have *tendered* me down exceedingly." After referring, in terms of strong commendation, to the celebrated work of Lord Kames, then just published, entitled *Elements of Criticism*, of which the author had sent him a copy, he closes as follows: "Wherever I am I shall esteem the friendship you honor me with, as one of the felicities of my life; I shall endeavor to cultivate it by a more punctual correspondence; and I hope frequently to hear of your welfare and prosperity." Not many days after the date of this letter, and before the end of August, Franklin sailed for America, in company with ten merchant-ships under convoy of a man-of-war. This fleet took the southern track, and touched at the island of Madeira. In a letter to Lord Kames, written after returning to England on his second mission, he gives a brief account of this passage, in the following words:—

"We had a pleasant passage to Madeira, where we were kindly received and entertained; our nation being then in high honor with the Portuguese, on account of the protection we were then affording them against France and Spain. It is a fertile island, and the differ-

ent heights and situations among its mountains, afford such temperatures of air, that all the fruits of northern and southern countries are produced there; wheat, apples, grapes, peaches, oranges, lemons, plantains, bananas, and so forth. Here we furnished ourselves with fresh provisions of all kinds; and after a few days proceeded on our voyage, running southward until we got into the trade-winds, and then with them westward till we drew near the coast of America. The weather was so favorable, that there were few days in which we could not visit from ship to ship, dining with each other, and on board of the man-of-war; which made the time pass much more agreeably than when one goes in a single ship; for this was like travelling in a moving village, with all one's neighbors in company."

He reached home on the 1st of November, 1762, after an absence from Philadelphia of a little less than six years. He found his wife and daughter in good health; "the latter," says he "grown quite a woman, with many amiable accomplishments acquired in my absence; and my friends as hearty and affectionate as ever, with whom my house was filled for many days, to congratulate me on my return."

His son, who remained behind him in England to consummate, with his father's consent, and approbation," his marriage with "a very agreeable West India lady, with whom he was very happy," arrived at Philadelphia with his wife, in the following February; and after a few days delay at home, he went, accompanied by his father, to take possession of his office as governor of New Jersey. "He met," says Franklin, "with the kindest reception from people of all ranks, and has lived with them ever since, in the greatest harmony."

CHAPTER XXIV.

SERVICES ACKNOWLEDGED — JOURNEY NORTH AND EAST — MILITIA BILL — CONESTOGO INDIANS — IMBECILITY OF GOVERNOR PENN — FRANKLIN UPHOLDS THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY — CONFUTES HIS ENEMIES — HIS SECOND MISSION TO ENGLAND — ORIGIN OF THE STAMP-ACT — DEAN TUCKER — RECEPTION OF STAMP-ACT IN AMERICA — EXAMINATION BEFORE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS — STAMP-ACT REPEALED — VALUE OF HIS SERVICES — OLD SCOTTISH TUNES.

Franklin, on his return to Philadelphia, was received, as already intimated, with the strongest demonstration of respect and affection, by his political as well as personal friends. During his absence he had been, every year elected as one of the representatives of the city to the Provincial Assembly; and as that body was in session when he returned, he soon took his seat as a member. On his appearance in his place, the house proceeded without delay to the consideration of his agency; and a committee having been raised to examine his accounts, unanimously reported, on the 19th of February, 1763, that they had found them to be just. A resolution was thereupon unanimously passed, fixing the period of his agency at six years, and granting him five hundred pounds sterling a year, and the thanks of the house, to be pronounced by the speaker, "to Benjamin Franklin, for his many services, not only to the province of Pennsylvania, but to America in general, during his

late agency at the court of Great Britain." These thanks were delivered by the Speaker, Mr. Norris, on the 31st of March; to which says the journal "Mr. Franklin, respectfully addressing himself to the Speaker, made answer, that he was thankful to the house for the very handsome and generous allowance they had been pleased to make him for his services; but that the approbation of this house was, in his estimation, far above every other kind of recompense."

In the course of the same spring, Franklin set out on a tour through all the colonies north of Pennsylvania, to examine and regulate the postoffices. In that journey he spent, as he relates in one of his letters, the summer and much of the autumn, travelled about sixteen hundred miles, and did not return to Philadelphia till the beginning of November. He took his daughter with him; and so different were the habits of that time, from those of the present age of steamboats and railroads, that the young lady, as Franklin writes to a friend, "kept to her saddle the greatest part of the journey, and was well pleased with her tour."

While in Boston, Franklin met with a fall which dislocated his shoulder; and though the joint was speedily and properly adjusted again, yet it gave him considerable pain, and so much disabled him from driving, or even bearing the motion of his carriage, on the rough roads of that day, that he was obliged to rest awhile from travelling. It appears from a letter to his sister, Mrs. Mecom, written after his return home, and it may be useful to mention the fact, that he used the cold bath frequently and with benefit, not only to his weakened limb, but as a general tonic. The same letter has a passage, which we copy for the sake of the shrewd, and yet good-humored notice it takes, of the annoyance frequently given by a well-meant, but a too busy and officious hos-

pitality. After referring to some little remaining weakness in his shoulder, he adds: "I am otherwise very happy in being at home, where I am allowed to know when I have eat enough, and drank enough, am warm enough, and sit in a place that I like, and nobody knows how I feel better than I do myself."

Notwithstanding the decision, which Franklin had obtained from the Privy Council, that the estates of the Proprietaries were subject to taxation in the same manner as all other property in the province, yet that decision did not restore harmony to the provincial government. The Proprietaries claimed other exclusive privileges and prerogatives, and their defeat on the great point of equal taxation, served only to exasperate them, and their partisans the more, particularly against Franklin, through whose exertions they had been discomfited; and as he continued to exert his great abilities in behalf of impartial legislation, and the rights of the people, with unswerving constancy as well as marked success, he became, more conspicuously than ever, the object of an enmity, which was envenomed by envy, and was manifested by the most unscrupulous misrepresentations of his conduct, and the most calumnious attacks upon his character. He met this hostility, however, with steady self-possession and firmness. He confuted the calumnies of his enemies, and went on discharging his public duties, maintaining the cause of law and order, and at the same time defending popular rights, against proprietary usurpation, with unabated zeal. And, indeed, to such a condition had the provincial administration now become reduced, through the imbecility and mismanagement of the present governor, (John Penn, nephew of Thomas, the principal Proprietary,) and the recklessness of the leading demagogues of his party, that insurrection, riot, murder, and confusion, prevailed so widely in the province,

and the civil authority had become so nearly powerless, that the governor was placed under the humiliating necessity of looking to Franklin for support. A brief statement of facts will illustrate what has just been said.

Though the war between Great Britain and France, had been terminated by the treaty of Paris, in February, 1763, yet the Indian tribes, in the French interest, still continued hostile, and making frequent bloody inroads upon the back settlements, spread terror throughout the western frontiers, which had been left almost totally defenceless, upon the withdrawal of the regular forces. The Pennsylvania frontier was particularly exposed to this savage warfare; and to furnish the protection due to the inhabitants in that quarter, money was granted by the Assembly, to raise and pay troops, and furnish them with all necessary supplies; and Franklin was placed in the board of commissioners, appointed to direct and superintend the expenditure of this money.

As Pennsylvania had no permanently-enrolled and organized militia, it became necessary to raise a military force for every emergency as it arose; and to do so, on this occasion, the Assembly promptly passed a bill for the purpose. That bill gave to each company, to be recruited under it, the right to nominate nine persons, or three for each of the offices of captain, lieutenant, and ensign, from which number, the governor was to select the individuals he might prefer, and commission them. The companies of a regiment being thus organized, their officers were to meet, and nominate three persons for each of the regimental officers, and the governor was to make his own selection, and bestow his commissions, as in the other case. The bill also provided moderate fines for neglect of duty, and what was deemed far more important than all the rest, enacted that all offences committed in this temporary body of troops, should be tried

according to the usual course of law, by a civil court and jury.

To this bill the governor refused his assent, unless the Assembly would amend it, by giving to him alone the unrestricted authority to designate, as well as commission every one of the officers — by increasing the fines threefold, and in some instances fivefold — and by substituting for civil courts and juries, courts-martial, to be called and constituted by himself alone, for the trial of any and every offence, great and small, with power not only to impose fines, but to inflict sentence of death. These amendments gave such unlimited power to the governor, and were so abhorrent to the principles and feelings of the Assembly, especially as applicable to the kind of troops to be raised, that "the house," says Franklin, "could by no means consent to give up the liberty, estates, and lives of their constituents, to the absolute power of a proprietary governor; and so the bill failed."

Thus, through the perverse temper, and inordinate demands of the governor, the Assembly was not permitted to employ the strength and means of the province for its defence against dangers from without; while within, through the prevalence of a partisan spirit in a dependent and unfaithful judiciary and magistracy, the laws had become so powerless, that many good citizens, whose lives had been threatened, for their endeavors to procure the regular and honest administration of justice, fled the province.

One of the most shocking proofs of this state of lawless anarchy, is presented in a narrative, drawn up by Franklin, in 1764, of the fate of a small remnant of Indians, called the Conestogos, from the name of their residence in the county of Lancaster. Their tribe had once belonged to the famous confederacy of The Six

Nations, but their friendship for the white man, had severed the connection. In the days of their prosperity, "on the first arrival of the English in Pennsylvania," says Franklin, "messengers from this tribe, came to welcome them, with presents of venison, corn, and skins;" and it was with this tribe, as being the nearest to the new-comers, that William Penn made his first treaty—a treaty which had often been renewed and never violated, till the time in question. As their lands and numbers diminished, and the white settlers pressed more closely and densely around them, a tract called the manor of Conestogo, was set apart for their exclusive occupation, and there they had dwelt unmolested, deriving a comfortable subsistence from their rude tillage, and their simple handicraft, in peace and friendship with their white neighbors, till near the close of 1763, when their number had dwindled to twenty persons, consisting of seven men, five women, and eight children of both sexes.

Such was the condition of these harmless people, when on the morning of the 14th of December, 1763, six of them, three men, two women, and a boy, (the rest of them being out among the neighboring white families, selling their baskets and other wares,) were murdered in cold blood, and their huts burnt, by a party of fifty-seven white men from the frontiers. This outrage caused great excitement among the white people of the vicinity; and the magistrates of Lancaster had the surviving Indians brought into that town and lodged in the workhouse as a place of security. Governor Penn, also, issued a proclamation calling on all magistrates, sheriffs, and other officers both civil and military, and all good subjects, to aid with their best diligence in discovering, and bringing the murderers to justice.

The above proclamation was issued on the 22d of

December, but it had scarcely got into circulation, when, on the 27th of the same month, fifty of the bloodthirsty band against whom it was levelled had the audacity to appear in Lancaster, mounted and armed as before; and going to the workhouse, broke in and murdered the remaining Indians while on their knees protesting their friendship for the whites and begging for mercy. This second act of diabolical ferocity was perpetrated in open day, in the face of the community, in defiance and contempt of the law and its ministers, and the murderers mounted and rode off unmolested.

Another proclamation was put forth by the governor, offering a reward of two hundred pounds for the apprehension and conviction of any three of the ringleaders of the band, and a pardon to any accomplice, not actually guilty of murder, who would discover any one of the principals and assist in convicting him.

So weak, however, was the government, so prostrate was the civil authority, and so generally was society disordered, that the proclamations effected nothing. The threats of the murderers against all who should openly condemn their acts, spread such terror through a large section of the province, that no one ventured to disclose by speech or writing what he knew. And this was not all. A company of one hundred and forty Indians of another tribe having been converted to Christianity by the Moravians, had detached themselves from their tribe, which was then hostile to the whites, and were living quietly within the province. From the same quarter to which the murderers of the Conestogos belonged, came forth threats against the lives of these converts; and so well founded was the alarm thus excited, that, after several efforts to place them out of danger in other places, the whole company was finally taken to Philadelphia to insure their safety.

In such a state of things it was that Franklin issued the narrative already mentioned, in which he placed the facts in so clear a light, denounced, in such bold and indignant language, the outrages committed and threatened, as a reproach and disgrace to the public authorities and the whole province, that the humanity, self-respect, public spirit, and honor of the people and the government to which he appealed, were at length roused to some sense of duty, and all seemed disposed, for a time at least, in Philadelphia and the more populous districts in its neighborhood, to make an effort to uphold the laws and restore order and security.

Still, such was the incompetency of the governor, that his own protection and that of the Indian converts was devolved in fact on Franklin; for when a large body of the armed insurgents, to quote his language, "marched toward the capital, in defiance of the government, with an avowed resolution to put to death the one hundred and forty Indian converts then under its protection," the governor appealed to him for assistance. Franklin promptly answered this appeal, and as there was no militia in the province, he adopted his former method of proceeding, when public danger was impending, and raised and organized a volunteer corps of a thousand men for the defence of the government. Indeed, Governor Penn found it expedient to make his headquarters at Franklin's house, and to act wholly by his advice.

When the insurgents found that preparation was thus made to meet force with force, they began to falter. Taking advantage of their hesitation, Franklin with three other persons went, at the request of the governor and council, to confer with them; and the result was, that they were induced to abandon their enterprise and return home.

But, notwithstanding services like these, the governor,

as soon as the immediate danger was over, returned to his perverse policy and his old party connections. The expenses, consequent upon these proceedings and the defence of the back settlements against the inroads of the banded tribes of hostile Indians, were heavy, and to meet them the Assembly passed a bill to raise fifty thousand pounds, in the usual way, by issuing bills of credit, to be redeemed by specific revenues raised by certain excises and a land-tax. This latter tax was made by Governor Penn the occasion of another quarrel with the Assembly. The decision of the privy council, which had declared the proprietary estates subject to taxation like all other property in the province, was accompanied, as we have seen, by some other directions designed to give greater precision to the acts of the Assembly, and among them was one that the uncultivated but actually located lands of the Proprietaries should "not be assessed higher than the lowest rate at which any located uncultivated lands belonging to the inhabitants should be assessed." The Assembly interpreted this as a direction that the proprietary lands of the class in question should be assessed at the same rates with similar lands of other people, of like quality and value; while the governor insisted that, under it, the very best of the proprietary lands referred to could be assessed no higher than the lowest assessment of the poorest lands of the same class belonging to others.

The Assembly urged that the decision of the council was expressly intended to establish equal taxation of all lands of equal value; that the governor's interpretation of the clause in question was a forced and unjust one, and was, in fact, in violation of the essential point of the decision, inasmuch as it was palpably repugnant to the principle of equality. But the governor persisted; and after a good deal of controversy, the Assembly, moved by the pres-

sure of the public exigency and by a humane feeling for the sufferings of the people on the frontier, gave way and passed the act as required by the governor.

This affair, however, only served to strengthen the majority of the Assembly and of their constituents in the conviction that no just and fair legislation was to be expected, as long as the government remained in the hands of the Proprietaries. They therefore adopted, just at the close of the session, a series of resolutions, setting forth the evils inflicted on the people of the province by the proprietary government, and declaring that no just and useful administration of public affairs could be expected, till their political power was taken from them and transferred directly to the king. Having passed these resolutions, the Assembly adjourned.

During the winter and spring, Franklin published an able exposition of the defects of the existing form of government, in which he fortified his position by reference to the other proprietary governments in America ; showing that, in every case, the continual controversies they had generated and the evils which had uniformly flowed from them, had "found no relief but in finally recurring to the immediate government of the crown ;" so that those of Maryland and Pennsylvania were the only two of the kind remaining. This pamphlet was entitled "*Cool Thoughts on the Present Situation of Public Affairs*"— and it made a strong impression, preparatory, as it was intended to be, to the meeting of the Assembly in May, 1764.

The meeting in May took place on the 14th of the month ; and on the 26th, Mr. Norris, who had been speaker of the Assembly for a long series of years, resigned his station, on account of the feeble state of his health, and Franklin was chosen in his place. He had, however, previously drawn and introduced a petition to the king,

asking, in the name of "the representatives of the freemen of the province of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met," for the contemplated change in the form of government; and the petition, backed as it was by many resolutions to the same effect, sent up to the house from meetings of the people in all quarters of the province, became at once the leading subject of the session. After a long and warm debate, in the course of which the champions of the proprietary party assailed Franklin with the bitterest invective, the petition was carried by a large majority.

The document was brief and directly to the point. It set forth that controversies were perpetually arising between the proprietary governors and the Assembly, as the direct consequence of the clashing between the private interests of the Proprietaries and their duties as the trustees of political power; that these controversies, as long experience had shown, were continually impeding the public service; that the government had become so factious and weak that it was unable to maintain its authority, or preserve the internal peace of the province, which was thus filled with riot and insurrection from armed mobs committing their outrages with impunity; and that there was no prospect of relief from these evils but from the king's taking the government of the province into his own hands, making an equitable compensation to the Proprietaries, pursuant to the contract of the original grantee.

The contract referred to in the petition was made by William Penn himself, who, long before his death, having become entirely convinced that the permanent welfare of his province required him to divest himself and his successors of all the political powers conferred by the original grant from the king, had not only determined to carry that contract into effect, but had actually re-

ceived part of the consideration to which it entitled him, and had provided, in his last will and testament, for the complete fulfilment of it by his heirs, in case he should die (as he did) before its consummation. The petition, therefore, was not only founded in political justice, but it did not infringe in any respect on the private rights of the Proprietaries, who were themselves, in truth, the only party against whom could be fairly brought the charge of violated faith, in reference to the obligations imposed either by the provincial constitution, or by the personal and transmitted covenants of its founder.

Of the members of the Assembly who opposed the petition and defended the Proprietaries, the most eminent was John Dickinson, who in later years acquired a higher reputation in a better cause, both as a member of the first Continental Congress and as the author of the celebrated "*Farmer's Letters.*" Shortly after the termination of the debate, Mr. Dickinson's speech was published with an elaborate prefatory discourse on the same side of the question. The ablest debater on the other side was Joseph Galloway, an eminent lawyer, who, in his reply to the speech of Mr. Dickinson, reviewed at much length and with distinguished ability the defects of the proprietary government, the vices of its administration, and the unhappy condition to which it had reduced the province. On the appearance of Mr. Dickinson's speech with its accompanient, Franklin, who, with all his ability as a writer, never figured as a debater, published Mr. Galloway's speech, with a preface from his own pen, remarking, in his opening paragraph, that he did so, not because Mr. Dickinson's speech appeared with a preface, but because that preface contained aspersions upon former Assemblies, and misrepresentations of their proceedings, demanding animadversion and correction. And truly, these were vigorously administered. He refuted the

statements of the Proprietaries and their partisans, exposed the unworthy selfishness and injustice of their policy, their contradictory pretensions, the factious and mercenary character of their administration, and vindicated the Assemblies assailed, with proofs drawn from public documents and notorious facts presented by the condition of the province. To borrow the appropriate words of the recent able editor of his works, "For sarcastic humor, point, and strength of argument, this preface is one of the best of his performances."

The legal term of the Assembly which voted the petition ended in September; and at the session which closed with its dissolution, information was received that the British cabinet entertained the design of raising a revenue in the colonies by a tax on stamps. This intelligence instantly produced great excitement in Pennsylvania, as in the other colonies, and Franklin's last signature as speaker was put to a resolution of the house, instructing their agent in London, Richard Jackson, to remonstrate against the contemplated tax as a violation of the rights of the colonies.

At the election which shortly followed, Franklin, who had been chosen, whether absent or at home, one of the representatives of the city of Philadelphia for fourteen successive years, was defeated by the unexampled exertions and corrupt means employed by the Proprietary party. The majority against him, however, was only twenty-five votes in four thousand. Even that was but a barren victory; for when the new Assembly met in October, it showed a decisive majority in favor of the petition for a change of government; and resolving to press the measure with their utmost energy, they proceeded on the 26th of the month just named to appoint Franklin their agent, with instructions to depart for England with all convenient despatch, to lay the petition before the king in

council, and use his best efforts to obtain the change prayed for.

The Proprietary minority in the house were so chafed by this result, that they threw off the restraints, not merely of ordinary decorum, but of common discretion; and in a paper, which they styled "*A Protest against the Appointment of Mr. Franklin as Agent for the Province of Pennsylvania,*" they assailed both the agent and the majority of the Assembly with such extravagant abuse grounded on such gross misrepresentation of facts, that it served, naturally and justly, to weaken their own cause, while it strengthened that of the people, and augmented the influence of their ablest and most distinguished leader. This effect was not a little enhanced by the reply of that leader, issued just as he was on the point of sailing for England, under the title of "*Remarks on a Late Protest, &c.*" No reply, in the way of either defence or retort, was ever more triumphant than this. He took a rapid review of the charges put forth in the protest, of his own public acts, of the course of the Proprietaries and their partisans, of the inconsistency of their conduct, the hypocrisy of their professions, and sustained himself not only by the public records and journals of the Assembly, but, on several points in reference to which the attack had manifested peculiar malignity, by written testimony on file from his assailants themselves; and all this with a clearness of exposition, a completeness of proof, a directness and pertinency in the application of facts, and a pungency of retort, in all respects as conclusive in point of argument, as the style and manner of the whole were admirably adapted to the occasion. Franklin closes this most successful vindication of himself and his friends in the Assembly in the following impressive words: "I am now to take leave (perhaps a last leave) of the country I love, and in which I have

spent the greatest part of my life. *Esto perpetua.* I wish every kind of prosperity to my friends: and I forgive my enemies."

The times were now beginning to deepen in gloom. The course pursued by the Proprietaries and their leading partisans had reduced Pennsylvania to a disturbed, distempered, and unhappy condition; and the usurping and tyrannical policy of the British government began to lower across the Atlantic and menace the dearest rights and privileges of the American colonies. To show something of the aspects of the political horizon — something of the anxiety with which thoughtful and earnest men were beginning to ruminate upon the future, as well as something of the estimation in which Franklin's abilities, weight of character, and services, were held by sober-minded patriots — the following testimony from a competent and impartial witness, given at a later day, will be read with interest: "This second embassy of Franklin," said Dr. Smith, the head of the college at Philadelphia, "appears to have been a measure preordained by the counsels of Heaven; and it will be for ever remembered to the honor of Pennsylvania, that the agent selected to assert and defend the rights of a single province, at the court of Great Britain, became the bold assertor of the rights of America in general; and, beholding the fetters that were forging for her, conceived the magnanimous thought of rending them asunder before they could be riveted."

The Assembly, when they appointed their agent, having no money at their disposal, voted that they would provide for the expenses of the mission in their next public-money bill. On the faith of that vote, the sum immediately needed was supplied by the public-spirited merchants of Philadelphia; and on the 7th of November, Franklin left home, escorted by a cavalcade of three hun-

dred of his townsmen and friends, for Chester, sixteen miles below, where he embarked. The next day the ship proceeded to Newcastle to take in some live stock for the passage, which done, she dropped down as far as Reedy island; and the last letter written by Franklin before leaving the shores of his native land, was dated at "Reedy island, 7 at night, 8th November, 1764." It was addressed to his daughter, and is full of tenderness and wise counsel. His sensibility had been deeply moved by the warm rally of his friends about him, after the virulence exhibited by his political enemies, and he says to her: "The affectionate leave taken of me by so many friends, at Chester, was very endearing. God bless them and all Pennsylvania." Though "the natural prudence and goodness of heart God had blessed her with," as he affectionately says to her, "make it less necessary to be particular in giving you advice," yet, says he, "the more attentively dutiful and tender you are toward your good *mother*, the more will you recommend yourself to *me*;" adding—"but why should I mention *me*, when you have so much higher a promise, in the commandments, that such conduct will recommend you to the favor of God?" Adverting to his political enemies, he exhorts her to peculiar circumspection, that she might give them no pretext for their watchful malevolence "to magnify her slightest indiscretions into crimes," in order to wound *him* through *her*. He enjoins it upon her to be constant in her attendance upon Divine worship, less for the sake of the preacher, or the sermon, than for the devotional exercises, the more important part of the service, because more efficacious in fostering piety and "amending the heart, than sermons" usually are; though he would not have her undervalue sermons even from unacceptable preachers, for "the *discourse* is often better than the *man*, as sweet and clear waters come through very dirty earth."

He desires her also "to acquire those useful accomplishments, arithmetic and book-keeping;" and in closing, he implores for her "the blessing of God, worth thousands of his, though his would never be wanting."

On the 9th of December, in the afternoon, the ship in which Franklin sailed dropped anchor off Spithead; and the same waters, which he had visited thirty-eight years before, as an obscure young journeyman printer transformed for a short while to a merchant's clerk, he now, for the first time since that period, again visited, on a diplomatic mission to the court of a great empire, intrusted with the rights and liberties of a rising commonwealth, and as a philosopher who had filled all Christendom with his fame. In a brief letter to his wife, written before landing, to inform her of his safe arrival, he says: "We have had terrible weather, and I have often been thankful that our dear Sally was not with me. Tell our friends who dined with us on the turtle, that the kind prayer they then put up for thirty days' fair wind to me, was favorably heard and answered, we being just thirty days from land to land." From Portsmouth, where he went ashore, Franklin proceeded without delay to London, and on arriving there he went immediately to his former lodgings at Mrs. Stevenson's, No. 7 Craven street. This event gave the people of Pennsylvania the liveliest gratification. Cadwallader Evans, in a letter to him, dated at Philadelphia, March 15, 1765, says: "A vessel from Ireland to New York brought us the most agreeable news of your safe arrival in London, which occasioned a great and general joy in Pennsylvania among those whose esteem an honest man would value most. The bells rang on that account till near midnight, and libations were poured out for your health, success, and every other happiness."

When, in September, 1764, as we have already seen,

information of the design of the British Parliament to raise a revenue in the colonies by laying a tax on stamped paper which was to be made necessary to the validity of all written contracts, reached the Assembly of Pennsylvania, that body, Franklin being then its speaker, promptly sent instructions to Richard Jackson, their general agent in London, to oppose the contemplated measure. When, shortly after, Franklin was sent on his present mission, besides the special instructions relating to it, he was also directed, as were the other colonial agents, to use his best efforts to prevent the passage of the stamp-act.

Of the origin of this famous measure, and of his own course in opposing it, Franklin has left a clear and interesting account in a letter written by him, in 1778, while he was residing at Paris as minister of the United States to the court of France. The letter was addressed to William Alexander, who had sent to Franklin a pamphlet relating to the subject and containing some material misstatements. It stated, among other things, that when Mr. Grenville, then the British prime minister, conceived the design of raising a revenue in the colonies, his first plan was to demand of them a specific sum, to be levied by them in such manner as they might think fit; but that they refused to grant anything, and that *in consequence* of that refusal, he brought forward the stamp-act. Franklin avers that "no one of these particulars was true," and then proceeds to state the actual course of the transaction. The substance of his statement is as follows :—

About the beginning of 1764, Mr. Grenville had a meeting of the colonial agents, then in London, at which he informed them of his design to introduce a bill at the next session of Parliament, to draw a revenue from the colonies by a tax on stamps; that he gave them this notice, to be communicated to their constitutents in season for them to consider the subject, and that if they could

suggest any other tax, which, being equally productive, would be more acceptable to them, they might let him know it. The agents accordingly wrote to their respective Assemblies, and their letters were received, as heretofore stated, early in the succeeding autumn.

The Assembly of Pennsylvania objected to the contemplated act on the ground that it would be, not only contrary to all recognised and long-established usage, but a direct encroachment on the rights and privileges of the colonies as vested in them by their charters. The constitutional and established mode of raising supplies in the colonies for the king's service, was by requisition from the king in council, whenever his majesty, as advised by his council, deemed a rightful occasion had occurred for making it; such requisition to be communicated by the minister having charge of colonial affairs, through the several colonial governors, to the respective Assemblies of the colonies, with explanations of the nature of the occasion, for their information and satisfaction, and with an expression of his majesty's regard and his reliance on their loyalty and public spirit for granting such sums as would comport with their ability, the mode of raising them being left to their discretion.

The colonies, it was urged, had always responded liberally to such requisitions — so liberally, indeed, during the then recent war, as greatly to exceed their just proportion; and though Parliament, pursuant to the king's recommendation, had reimbursed to them collectively two hundred thousand pounds a year, for five successive years, yet even that sum, a million in all, fell much short of a full indemnification. The meditated tax, therefore, would be not less ungracious than unjust. Besides, under their charters, their political connection was solely with the king: he alone was their sovereign, and his financial ministers had, as such, nothing to do with them;

Mr. Grenville had no authority to make requisitions upon them through their agents, nor had these any authority to stipulate anything concerning taxes by act of Parliament, inasmuch as the Parliament itself had no right to tax them at all, so long as they were not represented in that body.

Such was the position taken, in common with the other colonial Assemblies, by the Assembly of Pennsylvania; and in conformity therewith, that body, in the session of September, 1763, already referred to, passed a resolution purporting that, as they always had considered it their duty, so they should continue to consider it, to grant aids to the king, according to their ability, whenever such aids were applied for "in the usual constitutional manner."

When Franklin shortly after went to England, he took with him an authenticated copy of that resolution, and communicated it to Mr. Grenville before that minister introduced his bill for taxing stamps. Similar resolutions from other colonies were also laid before him; and if he had been wise enough to drop that measure and apply to the privy council for the usual requisition, "he would," says Franklin, "I am sure, have obtained more money from the colonies, by their voluntary grants, than he himself expected from his stamps. But he *chose compulsion* rather than *persuasion*, and *would not receive* from their good will what he thought he could obtain without it."

Thus Franklin showed that the course, which the pamphlet blamed the colonies for not taking, was the very course they actually took; and that the minister persisted in forcing his bill through Parliament, not only against the remonstrances and protests of the colonies, but in contempt of their unvaried practice and recognised duty of granting supplies for the king's service, in all

public emergencies, when called for in a manner consistent with the rights and liberties secured to them alike by their charters and by the British constitution. In this way, the obstinacy of one man, of an impracticable and arbitrary temper, by adhering to an extravagant claim of power not founded in right and never advanced before, became the real moving cause of that controversy, which, though it took various phases in its progress, never ceased until it resulted in sundering from the mother-country the noblest portion of her empire. The inherent inconsistency of such a claim was gross as its injustice. It was a fundamental principle of the British constitution that its subjects could not be rightfully taxed, or have a farthing of their property taken from them in any other way, without their own consent expressed directly by themselves or their legal representatives. This principle was recognised by Mr. Grenville as much as by his opponents: and, although his very proposal of a tax necessarily implied that the people to be taxed were subjects, yet he persisted in claiming for Parliament the right to tax hundreds of thousands of subjects, in all cases whatsoever, not only without their consent in any form, but against their universal remonstrance.

The earnestness of Franklin's opposition, not merely to the stamp-act, but to the whole claim of power on which it rested, was vividly expressed by him in a letter of July 11, 1765, to Charles Thompson of Philadelphia, so well known in after-years as the secretary of the Continental Congress. In quoting from that letter, we would remind the reader that the "claims of independence" mentioned in it, related merely to the counter-claims of Parliament respecting taxation, not to national independence: it was this very stamp-act and the power it asserted that first led to the agitation of the independence of '76; and the last remark quoted below shows that the

coming of that great event was already betokened to the forecasting mind of him who made it: "Depend upon it, my good neighbor," said Franklin, "I took every step in my power to prevent the passing of the stamp-act. But the tide was too strong against us. This nation was provoked by American claims of independence, and all parties joined by resolving in this act to settle the point. We might as well have hindered the sun's setting. *That* we could not do. But since it is down, my friend, and it may be long before it rises again, let us make as good a night of it as we can. We may still light candles. Frugality and industry will go a great way toward indemnifying us. Idleness and pride tax with a heavier hand than kings and parliaments. If we can get rid of the former, *we may easily get rid of the latter.*"

Mr. Thompson's reply to the above letter is so interesting, that we extract a part of it: "The sun of liberty," said he, "is indeed fast setting, if not already down, in these colonies. They are in general alarmed to the last degree. They can not bring themselves to believe, nor can they see how England with reason or justice expects, that they should have encountered the horrors of a wilderness, borne the attacks of barbarous savages, and, at the expense of their blood and treasure, settled this country to the great emolument of England, and after all quietly submit to be deprived of everything an Englishman had been taught to hold dear. It is not property only we contend for. Our liberty and most essential privileges are struck at."

Notwithstanding Franklin's constant and fearless assertion, both at home and in England, of the rights of the colonies under their charters — though the shrewd and accomplished governor Denny had vainly endeavored to lure him to the side of the Proprietaries by assurances of wealth and preferment — and though the imbecile gov-

ernor John Penn, when his administration was menaced with subversion by riot and insurrection incited by his own weakness and the misconduct of his magistrates, had sought the protection of Franklin and found it — yet the emissaries of that same faction had the effrontery to circulate a story that Franklin was in favor of the stamp-act. The charge, however, was so extravagantly false, and its motive so palpable, that it recoiled upon its inventors; and the zeal and energy of his efforts to convince the ministry of the evil tendency of the measure, and to prevent its passage, were rewarded by a marked increase of the public confidence and esteem.

Of the maligners of Franklin in England on this occasion, the most prominent was the Rev. Josiah Tucker, dean of Gloucester. He was addicted to politics, and wrote various pieces, in which he handled the colonial claims, as he supposed, very severely. In one of these pieces he charged Franklin with having, after the passage of the stamp-act, applied to Mr. Grenville for the office of distributor of stamps and collector of the stamp-duty for Pennsylvania. This charge having been brought to Franklin's notice some time after, he had the charity to suppose that the dean had been imposed upon by others, and wrote to him, in courteous terms, assuring him that the allegation was unfounded, and requesting him to withdraw it. To this the dean replied by saying that on inquiry he had found himself "mistaken in some circumstances" of the case, "though right as to the substance." To this insulting answer, Franklin replied that "if the *substance* was *right*, any mistakes in the circumstances could give him little concern;" but "knowing the *substance* to be wrong," and supposing that the dean could have no wish to injure his character, he asked him to communicate the particulars of his information, as he believed he could, after seeing what they were,

satisfy the dean that they were groundless; and he proposed this course as being "more decent than a public altercation, and better suiting the respect due to the character" of the dean.

The justice of this request the reverend gentleman could not but admit, and professing his readiness to comply with it, he tells Franklin that he had long considered his advocacy of the cause of the colonies as "exceeding the bounds of morality," but that "if it could be *proved* that he [the dean] had *unjustly suspected* him," he should acknowledge his error with much satisfaction;" and then, after this peculiarly modest introduction, he proceeds to give the *particulars* asked for, by saying that he had been "repeatedly informed" that Franklin had solicited Mr. Grenville for the office mentioned, "from which circumstance," he adds, "I myself concluded that you had made interest for it on your own account; whereas, I am now informed that there are no positive proofs" to that effect, but that "there is evidence still existing" of such an application for a friend; from *which circumstance* the dean again *concludes* that "the general merits of the question" are not materially varied, inasmuch as any distinction between oneself and a friend, in such a case, was above his comprehension; and then, in his gracious condescension, the dean closes with a compliment to Franklin's "great abilities and happy discoveries."

The gist of this charge was, as the reader will observe, that Franklin, from mercenary motives and in contempt of his professed principles, had, of his own volition, *applied* for the office named—had solicited it—made interest for it; and that there was proof, which, though it failed, in point of mere form, to sustain the charge against Franklin by name, did show that an application was made by him for the office mentioned in the name of a friend, and sustained the inuendo that the form of the pro-

ceeding was only a cunning pretext to cover the real object.

The deliberate malice of the reverend calumniator having thus betrayed itself, Franklin was too accurate an observer of character to expect from him any frank and manly confession of the truth. But resolving to leave him without excuse for his injustice, he wrote him a full and clear statement of the facts, accompanied by a comment, which, though expressed with the decorum and dignity due to himself and his position, exposed the sophistry and equivocation of his assailant, and his meanness as well as effrontery in continuing to insinuate what he could no longer affirm, so conclusively that the reverend Josiah Tucker did not attempt any rejoinder.

The facts of the case were these: Some days after the passage of the stamp-act, Mr. Grenville's secretary, Thomas Whately, wrote Franklin word that he wished to see him. Calling on him, therefore, the next morning, Franklin found several other colonial agents with Mr. Whately, who stated that, to give as little offence as possible to the colonies, in executing the act, the officers to distribute stamps and receive the duty were to be selected from among their own people, it being deemed but fair that the emoluments of this business should go to individuals belonging to the communities paying the tax, and not to foreigners; and that the object of calling the colonial agents together was, to request them to recommend competent and responsible persons in their respective colonies for the office in question, as great regard would be paid to their recommendation. The agents took it for granted that the proposal of Mr. Whately was seriously and candidly made, and they all made nominations. For Pennsylvania, Franklin named John Hughes, one of the best men in the province, saying at the same time that he did not know that Mr. Hughes would accept

the appointment, but if he should, he would discharge its duties faithfully. Not one of the agents dreamed that anybody could torture this civil compliance with a request from the minister into an *application from them* for office, or, still worse, into an *approval* of the *act* they had been so strenuously *resisting*.

These attacks upon him, however, gave little disturbance to Franklin's equanimity. Conscious of his rectitude, strong in the confidence of his constituents, and continually receiving evidence of the esteem and friendship of a large circle of the most distinguished and virtuous men of the time, he held on his course, faithful to his principles and his duties. He refers to this topic in a letter of July, 1765, to his friend Roberts. "Expressions of steady friendship," says he, "such as your letter contains, though but from one or a few honest and sensible men, who have long known us, afford a satisfaction that far outweighs the clamorous abuse of a thousand knaves and fools." The same composure of spirit, united with a steadfast reliance on Providence, is unequivocally indicated in a letter to his wife about the same time. "It rejoices me to learn," says he, "that you are more free than you used to be from the headache and the pain in your side. I am likewise in perfect health. God is very good to us both. Let us enjoy his favors with thankful and cheerful hearts; and, as we can make no direct return to him, show our sense of his goodness to us by continuing to do good to our fellow-creatures, without regarding the returns they make us, whether good or bad. For they are all his children, though they they may sometimes be our enemies. The friendships of this world are uncertain, transitory things; but his favor, if we can secure it, is an inheritance for ever."

The passage of the stamp-act, as soon as it was known in the colonies, produced a ferment among the people

everywhere. The Assemblies adopted resolutions denouncing it as beyond the constitutional power of Parliament, and a violation of the colonial charters; and in conformity with these resolutions, they prepared petitions to the king for the repeal of the obnoxious measure, and sent them to their agents in London to be laid before his majesty in council. These proceedings, though firm and explicit, were respectful in language and moderate in tone. They recognised their allegiance to the king, their duty to maintain the interests and honor of the crown, and bear their proper share of the burdens required for the public service, in the manner always recognised and pursued, but protested against the authority of Parliament as a foreign legislature, in which they were not represented, and which, therefore, had no rightful power to tax them.

But while the public bodies proceeded with dignified moderation, and the documents they put forth, though warm with the sense of invaded rights, were distinguished not only for ability, but for that decorum of language which best becomes a good cause, the people and their favorite orators, paying little regard to punctilio, denounced the stamp-act, the ministry, and the authority of Parliament, in the most vehement terms. The stamp-distributors were compelled to renounce their appointments; and when the stamp-paper arrived, not a bale was allowed to be landed, but, after being kept for some time on shipboard, the vessels that brought it took it all back to England.

Such was the reception of the stamp-act, by which Mr. George Grenville had so confidently expected to raise an annual revenue of a hundred thousand pounds sterling in the American colonies; and the exasperation it produced is easily accounted for when it is considered that, besides the assumption of power from which it pro-

ceeded, it expressly enacted, (to sum up its provisions in the words of Franklin,) that the people of the colonies should "have no commerce, make no exchange of property with each other, neither purchase, nor grant lands, nor recover debts; neither marry, nor make wills," unless they paid, in specie too, the duties imposed by the act on the paper it made necessary for the various purposes indicated, embracing all the important transactions of life.

But it was not the stamp-act alone that caused the outburst of indignant feeling and resolute remonstrance through the colonies. Not merely the people of England collectively, but their political writers and leading public men, had little knowledge of the actual condition of the colonies, or of the character of their population; and what is still more remarkable, the very statesmen who undertook to think for their colonial fellow-subjects and regulate their affairs, were culpably ignorant, not only of the internal relations, pursuits, trade, and resources, of the colonies, but of their history and progress — of the difficulties and dangers they had surmounted, in preparing their broad territories for the occupancy of a great and civilized people — of the vast benefits the mother-country had already derived from them, and the still greater promise of the future — or of the heavy burdens they had borne in her wars, not waged for their sake, but springing from her entangled connections with the nations of Europe; and yet, notwithstanding all this, and the loyal zeal it implied, those same ministers and their partisan writers were perpetually charging the colonies with disaffection and ingratitude, because they would not tamely submit to new burdens however crushing, and to claims of power which, if allowed, would wrest from them every right conferred on them by their charters and recognised by the British constitution itself. These

considerations had long been weighing upon the minds of the colonists, awakening their apprehensions, appealing to their sense of right, and goading them to resentment. When the information came, in the latter part of 1763, that the British ministry intended to propose the stamp-act to Parliament, the colonies saw that the time was at hand for the resolute assertion of their rights, whatever it might cost; and when the stamped paper arrived, it was but the lighted match applied to elements already prepared for explosion.

The actual tone of feeling and the tendency of public sentiment throughout the colonies, in 1765, is well stated by Franklin in a letter dated at London, the 6th of January, 1766, and commenting on a manuscript sent him by a friend, from some one whose name is not given, but who proposed a closer union of the colonies with the mother-country by providing for their representation in Parliament on the same footing with their fellow-subjects in England. "The time *has been*," says Franklin, "when the colonies would have esteemed it a great advantage to send members to Parliament, and would have *asked* the privilege, if they could have had the least hope of obtaining it. The time is *now come*, when they are *indifferent* about it, and will *not* probably *ask* it, though they *might accept* it if *offered;* and the time *will come*, when they will *certainly refuse* it. This people, however, is too proud to bear the thought of admitting the Americans to an equitable participation in the government."

The general tenor of the manuscript led Franklin to regard its author as a "sensible and benevolent" man. Yet that author spoke of "the very extraordinary efforts" by which "Great Britain, in the late war, had saved the colonists from destruction," and of "the consequent load of debt," as if all this was for the sake of the colonists alone, and as if they had done nothing; and he insisted,

therefore, that they "should be *somehow induced* to contribute some proportion toward the exigencies of state in future;" thus betraying his ignorance of the long-practised method of raising supplies in the colonies for "the exigencies of state," by application from the king in council, and of the remarkable fact that those colonies had contributed to the expenses of that same "late war" so much *beyond their "proportion,"* that even Parliament had voted them a million sterling by way of reimbursement. This writer, however, was a well-meaning man, whose project of union indicated some sense of justice; while, on the part of ministers and placemen generally, with ignorance not less gross than his, was associated a jealous enmity toward their American fellow-subjects, and a notion of parliamentary and ministerial omnipotence so exalted as scarcely to permit them to recognise such things as colonial rights: and the very pretension of the colonies that they had any, not subject to their control, seems to have excited a kind of resentful impatience to manifest their contempt for such claims as soon as possible, in every practicable form.

Though such were the views and feelings which had led to the passage of the stamp-act, and though the Grenville ministry and their majority in Parliament had laid the remonstrances of the colonies against the act, with their petitions for its repeal, on the table, not deigning to consider them, yet the sentiments they contained and the commotion in the colonies had made a strong impression on the minds of another class of British statesmen; and Mr. Grenville and his colleagues having been superseded by the marquis of Rockingham at the head of a ministry more favorable to the claims of the colonies, the question was brought up, at the commencement of the year 1766, with a determination on the part of the new ministry to propose the repeal of the obnoxious act.

With the view of obtaining light on this subject, the house of commons resolved itself into a committee of the whole, for the purpose of examining the colonial agents and others connected with the trade as well as the internal affairs of the colonies, respecting their population, pursuits, trade, resources, taxes, sentiments regarding their connection with the mother-country, and, in short, whatever might properly bear on the question, not merely of the stamp-act, but of the general policy to be adopted toward the colonies. In pursuance of this resolution, Franklin, with several others, was summoned before the house on the 3d of February, 1766, to undergo the appointed examination. This was a marked and memorable epoch in Franklin's life. On no occasion in his long and splendid career, whether as a statesman and political economist, or as a patriot and a man, did he ever appear with more shining advantage. Mr. Grenville and several of his adherents not less bitter than himself, as well as the supporters of the new premier, took part in the examination. The imposing character of the scene, the important and exciting interests involved, and still more, probably, his own position and the consciousness of his great reputation, were well calculated to disturb any man's mental balance; but Franklin showed himself in all respects equal to the occasion; and he never exhibited more unquestionable or higher proofs of the wide range of his political knowledge and sagacity, or of the acuteness, depth, clearness, and vigor, of his masculine understanding, in applying that knowledge in its manifold details, than he did in that severe test of his qualities before the house of commons. Self-collected and firm, yet with a modest dignity of deportment, he gave his answers with a readiness, perspicuity, directness, and manly boldness, which took his adversaries by surprise, and, while it commanded their respect, raised the admi-

ration and affection of his friends to enthusiasm. The interrogatories, one hundred and seventy-four in number, took a wide range, and, with the answers, embraced all the main points of the condition of the colonies, their internal administration, capabilities, and burdens; the aid they rendered the mother-country, and received from her; the extent of authority they conceded to her; their temper toward her prior to the passage of the stamp-act; the effect which that measure, and especially the principles on which it rested, had exerted on their sentiments, and the consequences which might be anticipated from pressing those principles — in short, the whole ground of colonial right and metropolitan power, with the conduct and merits of the respective parties to the great issues presented.

Our limits will admit only a cursory notice of a few prominent points of this examination. In arranging the provisions of the stamp-act, its framers seem to have taken it for granted that the stamps could be circulated by post as conveniently in the colonies as in England. In reply to questions on this point, Franklin demonstrated the folly as well as injustice of the act, by showing that the mails were and could be carried, for the most part, only along the seaboard; that the population generally was so thinly scattered over the great interior, that, to obtain stamps, the people would be compelled to make journeys at the expense of several pounds, in a large proportion of cases, in order to pay sixpence to the revenue; and that as this was required in coin, there was not enough of it in the colonies to pay the duty for a single year, inasmuch as the course of trade took nearly the whole of their hard money to England.

To the question, put by Mr. Grenville — "Do you think it right that America should be protected by this country, and pay no part of the expense?" — Franklin

replied, "That is not the case. The colonies raised, clothed, and paid, during the last war, nearly twenty-five thousand men, and spent many millions;" and to the further question — "Were you not reimbursed by Parliament?" — it was answered, "We were only reimbursed what, in your opinion, we had advanced beyond our proportion; and it was a very small part of what we spent. Pennsylvania disbursed about five hundred thousand pounds, and the whole reimbursement to her did not exceed sixty thousand. Being asked if the people of America would pay the stamp-duty if moderated, he replied, "No, never, unless compelled by force of arms." To the question, "What was the temper of America toward Great Britain before the year 1763?" Franklin answered, "The best in the world. They submitted willingly to the government of the crown. . . . Numerous as the people are in the old provinces, they cost you nothing in forts, citadels, garrisons, or armies, to keep them in subjection. They were governed by this country at the expense only of a little pen, ink, and paper; they were led by a thread. They had not only a respect, but an affection, for Great Britain — for its laws, customs, manners, and even a fondness for its fashions, which greatly increased their commerce. . . . . but that temper is very much altered now."

To other questions, the import of which will be apprehended by the answers from which we cite, Franklin replied that "the authority of Parliament was allowed to be valid in all laws, except such as should lay *internal taxes*" — laws for the regulation of external commerce never being disputed; that the population of the colonies doubled, on an average, every twenty-five years, but that the demand for British manufactures increased much faster, consumption being affected not only by numbers but by the increase of wealth: as, in Pennsylvania, for

example, the importation of British goods had risen from about fifteen thousand pounds, in 1723, to about half a million sterling, in 1763; that the colonies had been accustomed to regard Parliament as "the great bulwark of their liberties and privileges;" that "arbitrary ministers might, at times, attempt to oppress them, but they had relied on Parliament for redress," as in the "strong instance" when ministers proposed a bill to give "royal instructions" the force of *laws* in the colonies, which the commons rejected; but that their respect for Parliament had been greatly lessened by "restraints lately laid on their trade," which shut out gold and silver — by prohibiting paper-money for their own use — and then by "demanding a new and heavy tax on stamps; taking away, at the same time, trials by juries, and refusing to receive and hear their petitions;" that if any future tax should be imposed on them, upon the principles of the stamp-act, they would receive" it just as they do this — they would not pay it; that they would regard any assertion of such principle by Parliament as "unconstitutional and unjust," because they could not be rightfully taxed where they were not represented."

Having admitted the lawfulness of duties laid for the regulation of external trade, he was asked if he could show the smallest difference in principle between such duties and *internal taxes.* The question was of vital importance to the whole controversy, and came from the Grenville party. Franklin promptly answered that he thought the difference very great; that the *external* tax, or duty on imports, passed, with freight and other charges, into the price of the commodity imported, and if the people did not choose to pay the price, they need not take the article. "But an *internal* tax is forced from the people without their consent, if not laid by their own representatives:" as, in the case of the stamp-act, they

were required to use the stamp, to render any of their contracts valid, and compelled to pay the duty under the peril of ruinous penalties. But suppose, as he was then asked, the external tax or import duty were laid on the *necessaries of life* used in the colonies, would not that be the same, in effect, as an internal tax? To this he answered, "I do not know a single article imported into the colonies, but what they can either do without, or make themselves;" that English cloth was "by no means absolutely necessary;" that so far from its taking them a long time to supply themselves with clothing, "they had made surprising progress in that way already," and that "before their old clothes are worn out, they will have new ones of their own making;" that, for securing a supply of wool, they had "entered into combinations to eat no more lamb, and very few lambs had been killed in the last year;" that they did not need the large establishments which were necessary to the production of cloths for the purpose of trade, but their spinning and weaving were done in their own families

The question returning again to the stamp-act, Franklin was asked if anything short of military force could carry it into effect. To this he replied, "I do not see how military forces can be applied to it; they would find nobody in arms, and they could not compel a man to take stamps who should choose to do without them; they would *find* no rebellion, though they might, indeed, *make* one;" that if the act were not repealed, the consequence would be a "total loss of the respect and affection of the American people for Great Britain, and of all the commerce thereby fostered;" that they could do without British goods, and had already, by general agreement, discontinued the use of all the merely fashionable and more costly kinds.

Being asked by Mr. Grenville if the postage rates were

not a tax—"No," said Franklin, "postage is not of the nature of a tax; it is a *quantum meruit*—a compensation for service rendered: no person is obliged to pay it, if he does not choose to receive the service;" and being further asked if their ill humor would induce the Americans to pay as much for inferior goods of their own make as for better fabrics made in England, he replied, "Yes; people will pay as freely to gratify one passion as another—their resentment as their pride." To the question whether the Americans would be content to have their tribunals of justice closed, and the enforcement of contracts suspended, rather than use the stamps necessary to legalize them, he gave the following bold and pregnant answer: "It is hard to say what they would do. I can only judge how others would think and act, by what I feel myself. I have a great many debts due me in America; but I had rather they should remain unrecoverable by any law, than submit to the stamp-act. They will then be debts of honor. It is my opinion the people will either continue in that situation, or find some way to extricate themselves—perhaps by generally agreeing to proceed in the courts without stamps." Being asked if, in repealing the stamp-act, Parliament should in some way manifest its resentment toward the opposers of the act, would the colonies acquiesce in the authority of that body, Frankiin answered dryly—"I don't doubt at all, that if Parliament repeal the stamp-act, the colonies will acquiesce in the authority."

It was then asked, if Parliament, merely to affirm its right to tax the colonies, should lay a tax on them, however small, would they pay it. This question was put by a member who advocated the repeal of the stamp-act, and was designed to give an opportunity to present some important points more in connection than the course of inquiry had yet allowed.

Franklin's answer was full and discriminating. He called attention to the distinction between the settled convictions of the reflecting classes as shown by the deliberate action of the public bodies, in the colonies, and the riotous proceedings in various places at the first outbreak of popular feeling, all which had been confounded together by the recent ministry and their adherents; he testified that the Assemblies were opposed to all riots, and would punish their ringleaders if they had the power; that they had not taken a single step toward forcible resistance, and had only declared their rights by peaceful resolution and remonstrance, but that, as to any internal tax, however small, laid by a legislature in England on the colonists while unrepresented in that legislature, they would never submit to it; that such a tax, moreover, was wholly unnecessary, inasmuch as the colonial Assemblies had always promptly raised supplies, in the same way that Parliament raised them, that is, by requisition from the king; and yet the colonies were continually misrepresented and abused, on this very point, in parliamentary speeches and partisan pamphlets, by false charges of ingratitude and injustice, as having put the nation to immense expense in defending them in the last war, while they refused to bear any part thereof, when they had, during that very war, kept in the field as many men as had been sent from England, that is to say, about twenty-five thousand, and by so doing had incurred debts which would burden them for many years to come; that this was far beyond their proportion, king, lords, and commons, had admitted by their reimbursing acts, though the million sterling thus granted fell far short of actual indemnification.

When this strong answer had been rendered, Charles Townshend, one of the recent Grenville ministry, asked if the colonies would contribute to an English war in

Europe. Franklin replied that he thought they would, according to their ability; that they considered themselves as part of the British empire, though regarded in England as foreigners; that in 1740, in the war with Spain, having been called on for aid to the expedition against Carthagena, on the Spanish Main, in South America, and as far as Europe from the northern colonies, they sent three thousand men upon that ill-starred enterprise; that although the recent war with France was commonly spoken of in England as having been waged for the sake of America, that point was misunderstood; that it sprang from a question of limits between Nova Scotia and Canada, involving territory claimed by the crown, not by any of the colonies, and in which no colonists had any interest; that on the Ohio, also, hostilities sprang from French encroachment on British rights in the Indian trade, the seizure of British traders and their manufactures, and of a fort (Du Quesne) erected by those traders to protect that trade, which was not a colonial but a British interest altogether; that it was only after Braddock's defeat, that the colonies were molested by the Indians or the French, with both of whom they had previously been at peace. Though the British troops, therefore, were not sent out for the sake of the colonies, and though the war originated wholly on British account, yet the colonies had given their best efforts to support it and bring it to a happy issue.

Another adherent of the Grenville party, Mr. Nugent, having asked Franklin if he could deny that the preceding war with Spain was waged for the sake of America, caused as it was by Spanish captures made in American seas — "Yes," said Franklin, "caused by the capture of British ships carrying on a British trade there with British manufactures." Mr. Grenville then asking if the recent Indian war, since the peace with France, was not

for America only—*that* war, said Franklin, was but the sequel of the other, and the colonies bore much the larger share of the cost, having been ended by General Bouquet with a force of above a thousand Pennsylvanians, and only about three hundred regulars—for the small garrisons stationed at Niagara and Detroit, solely to protect the British trade with the Indians, should not be counted; and being then asked if troops from England were not necessary to defend the colonies against the Indians—"No, by no means," replied Franklin, "it never was necessary. They defended themselves, when but a handful, and when the Indians were much more numerous, and had driven them over the mountains, without troops from England, and there is not the least occasion for them now." Being asked by Mr. Ellis, another member of the stamp-act ministry, if the colonial Assemblies knew that the English statute called the Declaration of Rights forbids the raising money from any subject except by act of Parliament—Franklin replied that they knew it well; that they held *that* statute to be an essential part of the British constitution, but that it applied only to subjects within the realm; that the colonies were not within the realm, any more than Ireland, but had their own Parliaments, or Assemblies, which, in conformity with the spirit of the great statute cited, and by their own charters, were vested with the power to tax their respective constituents, the people represented by them, while the Parliament of Great Britain had no right to levy an internal tax, either in Ireland or the colonies, until they were represented in that body: for the Declaration of Rights expressly says that such taxes can only be laid by *common consent*, and they had no representatives in that body to give their part of that common consent; that in raising supplies on requisition, though the grant was, in terms, "to the king," yet his requisition

usually designated the occasion, and the money was raised in such way as the Assemblies themselves might deem most convenient to their constituents; that if the stamp-act were repealed, and the king should ask, in the usual way, for money from the colonies, he believed they would grant it, for the Assembly of Pennsylvania had expressly instructed him, as their agent, to say so, and he had communicated such instruction, before the passage of the stamp-act, to the minister who introduced it.

Being asked if the Pennsylvania Assembly would rescind their resolutions, provided Parliament would repeal the stamp-act, he said he thought not; and being further asked if he did not know that there was a clause in the Pennsylvania charter expressly reserving to Parliament the right to levy taxes there, he answered that there was a clause by which the king covenants that he would levy no taxes there, unless with the consent of the Assembly, *or* by act of Parliament; that the Assembly interpreted that clause in connection with Magna Charta, the Petition and Declaration of Rights, and other fundamental parts of the British constitution, defining the rights and liberties of Englishmen; that it is one of the rights thus secured, that they can not be taxed but by their *common consent*, which *necessarily implied representation*, as already explained.

It was then asked if the words of the charter to Penn expressed any distinction between internal and external taxes, and if, by his interpretation, the Assembly might not object to the latter class of taxes as well as the former. To this Franklin significantly replied: "Many arguments have been lately used here to show the Americans that there is no difference, and that if you have no right to tax them internally, you have none to tax them externally, or make any other law to bind them. At *present, they* do not reason so; but, in *time*, they *may possibly be con-*

vinced by these arguments." The question being again pressed whether, if the stamp-act were repealed, the Assemblies would erase their resolutions, he replied—"No, never;" and being then asked if there was a power on earth that could force them to do so, he answered—"None that I know of; no power, how great soever, can force men to change their opinions." The examination closed with recurring again to the former and existing tone of feeling among the colonists toward the mother-country, which Franklin illustrated by saying that "it used to be their pride to indulge in her fashions and manufactures; but *now* it was their pride to wear their old clothes till they could make new ones."

The effect of this examination on the members of Parliament was obvious and powerful. Many British merchants, also, engaged in the American trade, sent in petitions in aid of those from the colonies; and when the bill for repealing the stamp-act was taken up, though the late ministers and their adherents opposed it with great violence, yet, after a debate of much vehemence, it was carried through both houses, and received the king's assent about the middle of March. Writing to his old Philadelphia friend Roberts, on the 27th of February, 1766, just after the repeal-bill had passed the house of commons, Franklin says: "I hope I have done even my enemies some service in our struggle for America. It has been a hard one, and we have been often between hope and despair; but now the day begins to clear. . . . The partisans of the late ministry have been strongly crying out, 'Rebellion!' and calling for *force* to be sent against America. The consequence might have been terrible, but milder measures have prevailed." After the bill had become a law, he wrote to his wife, on the 6th of April: "As the stamp-act is at length repealed, I am willing you should have a new gown, which you may

suppose I did not send sooner, as I knew you would not like to be finer than your neighbors, unless in a gown of your own spinning. Had the trade between the two countries totally ceased, it was a comfort to me to recollect that I had once been clothed from head to foot in woollen and linen of my wife's manufacture — that I never was prouder of any dress in my life — and that she and her daughter might do it again, if necessary."

The news of the repeal of the stamp-act — "that mother of mischiefs," as Franklin styled it in a letter to a friend in Boston — and of the conspicuous and most effective services by which he had contributed to that repeal, filled his friends in America with the liveliest exultation. One of those friends, Joseph Galloway, an able and active man, writing to Franklin's son, then governor of New Jersey, under date of the 29th of April, says: "It gives me a pleasure I can not well express, to hear that Dr. Franklin was examined at the bar of the house of commons. Dr. Fothergill writes thus to William Logan, and that he gave 'such distinct, clear, and satisfactory answers to every interrogatory, and spoke his sentiments on the subject with such perspicuity and firmness, as did him the highest honor, and was of the greatest service to the American cause.'" The letters from Dr. Fothergill, Whitefield, and others present at the examination, were full of praise and admiration for the manner in which Franklin acquitted himself on that occasion. One says: "Our worthy friend, Dr. Franklin, has gained immortal honor by his behavior at the bar of the house. The answerer was always found equal if not superior to the questioner. He stood unappalled, gave pleasure to his friends, and did honor to his country." Another says: "I can safely assert, from my own personal knowledge, that Dr. Franklin did all in his power to prevent the stamp-act from passing; that he waited upon the minis-

try that then was, to inform them fully of its mischievous tendency; that he has uniformly opposed it to the utmost of his ability; and that in a long examination before the house of commons, he asserted the rights and privileges of America with the utmost firmness, resolution, and capacity;" and another, after similar statements, adds: "He did himself great credit, and served your cause not a little. I believe he has left nothing undone that he imagined would serve his country." The examination being published a few months afterward, it was immediately translated into French and circulated over Europe. When the news, that the bill repealing the stamp-act had been consummated by the assent of the king, reached America in authentic form, the colonial Assemblies passed resolutions of thanks to the king and Parliament; and they expressed also their deep sense of the service rendered by Franklin to the general cause of American rights. In Pennsylvania, the acknowledgments of the great services of their agent were peculiarly warm, not only from the Assembly, but on the part of the inhabitants. Philadelphia was illuminated; and on the 4th of June, the king's birthday, the occasion was celebrated by a feast on the banks of the Schuylkill. A vessel named the "Fránklin" took a throng of his friends to the banquet; the royal family, the Parliament, the prominent advocates of the act of repeal, were toasted and saluted with artillery, and Franklin's name especially was, there and everywhere, "freshly remembered." Indeed, a large portion of the proprietary party, the well-meaning men, who had been misled by false representations of Franklin's motives and conduct, now came to the knowledge of so much evidence of his disinterested zeal and efficient effort in behalf of colonial rights, that they laid aside their prejudices; and only a few ambitious and mercenary men, who could not forgive him for

his merits and his fame, remained openly hostile to him. And although the Grenville party, by their gross misrepresentations of the state of facts and feelings in the colonies, and by their appeals, both in Parliament and through the press, to the national pride of the English people, aided undoubtedly by some unnecessary and imprudent heat on the part of Mr. Pitt, in denouncing them and their policy, had succeeded in carrying a declaratory act affirming the right of Parliament *to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever* — yet this assertion of an abstract principle, though it cast at once some shade of apprehension over the minds of all reflecting men, did not, for the time, appear to repress the public joy for the practical benefit obtained in the repeal of the stamp-act, which was greeted as a token that, whatever might be the abstract claims in behalf of British sovereignty, the attempt to enforce them by actual legislation would be relinquished as an unwise policy.

In the midst of his strenuous and multifarious exertions in the cause of the colonies, however, Franklin did not wholly suspend his philosophic correspondence. One of his letters, written in the summer of 1765, on the character of the old and simple Scottish tunes, is too remarkable to be passed without notice. This topic was suggested by some remarks on music, as an object of taste, as well as a source of enjoyment, in the "Elements of Criticism" by Lord Kames, to whom Franklin addressed his letter. He holds that the pleasure derived by artists and other practised musicians, from pieces of great compass and intricate variety, does not arise from either the melody or the harmony of the sounds, but from the skill and dexterity displayed in the performance of difficult passages, and is similar, in *kind*, to the pleasure derived from the wonderful feats of agility and hazard performed by rope-dancers and tumblers; and that it is for the want

of training in the difficult parts of music, that people who have only a natural ear for the "concord of sweet sounds," do not enjoy these intricacies of musical composition, while the natural melodies and simple harmonies of the traditionary airs mentioned, fill them with delight. After quoting the remark of Kames that "melody and harmony are separately agreeable, and in union delightful," Franklin proceeds with characteristic acuteness and good sense, to analyze the tunes in question and the pleasure they impart, substantially as follows: He maintains that those tunes do, in fact, present the very union suggested by Kames, not simultaneously, indeed, but in succession; and he explains this seeming paradox by saying that, although in strictness *melody* is a *succession* of musical sounds, and *harmony* their *coexistence*, yet, as the mind retains a perfect idea of the pitch of each note in a series till the next note is sounded, those notes are as truly compared, and the enjoyment arising from their harmony is the same, as if they were both sounded together.

To show the correctness of his position, he refers to the readiness with which a note, on being sounded, is repeated in the same pitch, whether by the voice or the string of an instrument; and to the fact that, when two notes are not in unison, though the dissonance is perceived when they are sounded together, yet *which* is *wrong* is perceived only when they are sounded successively. These perceptions, moreover, he thinks are not merely *recollected*, but arise from a continuance of those vibrations of the ear-drum, by which the sensation of sound is excited in the auditory nerve; as, with the other organs of sense, the impressions made on them remain more or less distinct for a time after the several objects producing them are removed.

Having established this point in the philosophy of mu-

sical perception, he proceeds to show that, in the composition of the tunes in question, "almost every *succeeding emphatical* note is a third, a fifth, an octave, or some note in *concord* with the *preceding* note; *thirds*, which are very pleasing notes, being chiefly used." Moreover, when it is considered that these tunes were composed by ancient minstrels, to be played on the harp, accompanied by the voice, the harmonical succession of notes seems not only natural but necessary; inasmuch as the wire of the ancient harp prolonged the note, and had no means of stopping it the instant a succeeding one was struck. "To avoid actual discord it was therefore necessary that the next emphatic note should be a chord with the preceding one, as their sounds must exist at the same time." That the old harp was "of the simplest kind, without any half-notes but those in the natural scale, with no more than two octaves of strings, from C to C," he infers from the fact that "not one of those tunes, really ancient, has a single artificial half-note in it, and that in cases where it was most convenient for the voice to use the middle notes of the harp, and place the key in F, the B, which if used should be a B flat, is always omitted, by passing over it with a third."

Such is the physical analysis; and thence, says Franklin, "arose the beauty in those tunes that have so long pleased, and will please for ever, though men scarcely know why." It may be added these airs are marked by a singleness of character answering to the several emotions they are intended to express; and being thus found in unison with our moral as well as our organic structure, they are intelligible to all, and obtain the response of all hearts.

CHAPTER XXV.

VISIT TO THE CONTINENT — TRUE RELATIONS OF AMERICA TO ENGLAND — VISITS PARIS — CHANGES IN THE CABINET — LORD HILLSBOROUGH — VISIT TO IRELAND — LIGHTNING-RODS FOR POWDER MAGAZINES — HE ADVISES FIRMNESS AND MODERATION IN AMERICA — THE HUTCHINSON LETTERS — INEFFECTUAL ATTEMPTS AT CONCILIATION — RETURNS HOME.

Franklin's arduous exertions during the pendency of the stamp-act question, not only in the long and exciting examination before the house of commons, but in urging upon ministers and other leading men, in personal interviews as well as private correspondence, and upon the public through the press, the multifarious considerations which ought to insure the repeal of the obnoxious act, seriously impaired his health. Writing to his wife on the 13th of June, 1766, he says: "I wrote you that I had been very ill lately. I am now nearly well again, but feeble. To-morrow I set out with my friend Dr. Pringle (now Sir John) on a journey to Pyrmont, where he goes to drink the waters." Franklin having, the year before, omitted taking one of his customary annual journeys, had felt the bad effect of that omission on his health very sensibly, as he thought, during the preceding winter and spring; and in this excursion to the continent he looked for benefit, not to the waters his friend was seeking, but to the exercise of travel, the change of air, new scenes, and more agreeable and varied forms of mental

entertainment. He was absent about two months, and spent the time chiefly in Hanover and the north of Germany. Wherever he went he was received with distinguished attention by the learned; for his fame had been long spread throughout Europe, and his merits as a philosopher were more highly and therefore more justly appreciated on the continent than in Great Britain. No details of this journey are to be found among his writings; but there is a letter, in Latin, from Professor Hartman, of the university of Gottingen, received by Franklin some months afterward, which well exemplifies the exalted esteem in which he was held by the learned Germans. The professor speaks of the great pleasure with which he recollected the day on which he first saw and conversed with him; of his deep regret at not having been able then to show him any new experiments in electricity worthy of his attention; that the prince Schwartzenburg of Rudolstadt, (who corresponded with the professor,) on hearing of Franklin's visit to Germany, had expressed his earnest wish to become personally acquainted with him, and for that purpose had sent a learned friend to Gottingen with his salutations, who arrived the very day of Franklin's departure; that as the prince had requested of the professor directions for the most proper form of the lightning-rod, which he wished to introduce into his own territories, the professor solicited from Franklin his most matured views on that point; that as he contemplated writing a complete history of electricity, and as there was no name connected with that subject so great as Franklin's, he begged of him an account of his first experiments and discoveries; that he relied on Franklin's goodness to excuse so bold a request; that compliance with it would give him great happiness, and that he should always be glad of any opportunity to promote his wishes.

Franklin, on his return to England, upon this second mission, having renewed his correspondence with Lord Kames, received a letter, written a little before the examination in the house of commons, in which that liberal-minded nobleman expressed his views very freely on the American question. The general accordance of those views with his own gratified Franklin exceedingly, but he saw mingled with them several mistakes, derived from the English press, concerning some important facts; and to set his friend right, he sent, with his reply, a report of the examination mentioned. In his reply he observed also that it had become particularly important that "clear ideas should be formed on solid principles, both in Britain and America, of the true political relation between them, and the mutual duties belonging to that relation;" and he therefore urged his lordship to consider the subject deliberately and fully, as, from his high judicial position, his abilities, and impartiality, he was peculiarly well qualified to render the nation very great service. It seems that Lord Kames had, in his letter, expressed himself in favor of such a union between the two countries as should give the colonies their just proportion of representatives in Parliament. To this view Franklin, in his reply, fully assents, (it was, indeed, as we have seen, one he had long held,) as "the only firm basis on which the political grandeur and prosperity of the empire could be founded;" that the colonies would once have gladly adopted it, but had now become indifferent to it, and, if much longer delayed, would reject it; that the pride of England would delay it, and it would never take effect. He adds: "Every man in England seems to consider himself as a piece of a sovereign over America; seems to jostle himself into the throne with the king, and talks of *our subjects in the colonies*. The Parliament can not well and wisely make

laws suited to the colonies, without being properly and truly informed of their circumstances, ability, temper, &c. This it can not be, without representatives from them; and yet it [Parliament] is fond of this power, and averse to the only means of acquiring the necessary knowledge for exercising it; which is desiring to be *omnipotent* without being *omniscient*." In the course of his letter, which is long and able, he sketches the history of the colonies; exposes the gross mistake, which had become quite common in England, that they had been planted and fostered by Parliament, whereas, they were planted solely at the expense and risk of *private persons*, with the assent of the *king* and under charters from *him;* and on those conditions consented to continue the king's subjects, though in a foreign country, which had not been conquered by England, to which she had no claim of any kind beyond the naked, abstract claim of discovery, and where there was no proprietorship in the soil except that of the colonists, who purchased, settled, defended, and enlarged their territories with their own individual means and at their own personal peril. In fact, Parliament had never been consulted on the subject, at any time or in any manner, either by colonist or king, and had never noticed the colonies at all, until long after they had thus become established, and began to present temptations to the covetousness of wealth and power—to promise advantages to the commerce of the mother-country, and aggrandizement to her ambitious statesmen and their partisans. The colonists, having taken their charters from the king, and having thus acknowledged allegiance to him as their common sovereign, with the express right of legislating upon their own internal affairs in their own Assemblies, made up of representatives chosen by themselves, associated with governors and judges representing the executive and judicial authority of the king, they

constituted, in truth, so many separate states, acknowledging one common sovereign, indeed, but as independent of the *people of England* and *their* legislative representatives, as they were of each other, or as were the people of Scotland prior to their union, or as the people of Ireland and of Hanover then were.

In short, the people of America, in their respective colonies, stood on the same footing of equality with the people of England, being subjects of the same king, but having their own separate constitutions, that is to say, their charters, which secured to them, in express terms, the right of legislating for themselves by representatives of their own choice, and managing their own affairs in all respects independently of the representatives of their English fellow-subjects; and whatever powers the king himself possessed, were vested in him, in point of fact, by their own consent, through the charters they held from him, and by all those parts of the British constitution itself which limited or in any way affected the royal prerogative. This was the broad and free basis of equal rights on which Franklin and other eminent American patriots, but he among the first and most influential of them all, placed the colonies; on which the people of those colonies, under such guidance, fast rallied; and on which they stood with unshaken firmness, at the ultimate peril of "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor."

At the time now spoken of, however, though Franklin and some of his great compatriots were resolved to maintain the ground described, at every hazard, yet none of them had yet begun to broach the doctrine of absolute independence. They thought not merely that the colonies were not yet strong enough for a total rupture with the mother-country, but that their connection might still be rendered more useful to America, as well as to Brit-

ain, if the statesmen of the latter could be induced to adopt wise counsels, waive their extravagant claims of power, and pursue a liberal and conciliatory policy. To attain this purpose, they labored in good faith toward both parties, pressing their arguments with earnest and honest zeal, and occasionally uttering their warnings with manly boldness and prophetic sagacity. A passage in the latter tone occurs near the close of the letter to Lord Kames, and it marks the forecast of Franklin too strongly to be omitted. Having intimated that the union mentioned was probably more important, after all, to Britain than to America, he proceeds: "America may suffer at present under the arbitrary power of this country; she may suffer, for a while, in a separation from it; but these are temporary evils which she will outgrow. Scotland and Ireland are differently circumstanced. Confined by the sea, they can scarcely increase in numbers, wealth, and strength, so as to overbalance England. But America, an immense territory, favored by nature with all advantages of climate, soils, great navigable rivers, lakes, &c., must become a great country, populous and mighty; and will, in less time than is generally conceived, be able to shake off any shackles that may be imposed upon her, and perhaps place them on the imposers. In the meantime, every act of oppression will sour the tempers of her people, lessen greatly if not annihilate the profits of your commerce with them, and hasten their final revolt; for the seeds of liberty are universally found there, and nothing can eradicate them. And yet there remains among that people so much respect, veneration, and affection for Britain, that, if cultivated prudently, with kind usage and tenderness for their privileges, they might be easily governed still for ages, without force, or any considerable expense. But I do not see here a suf-

ficient quantity of the wisdom necessary to produce such conduct."

In the autumn of 1767, Franklin, in company with his friend Sir John Pringle, took an excursion to France. The French embassador, M. Durand, who had become much interested in American affairs and cultivated Franklin's society, furnished him with many letters of introduction, and when he arrived at Paris, he was treated with much distinction. He visited Versailles, where, with his friend, he was presented to the royal family; and besides seeing whatever was curious or striking in the capital, he formed many valuable acquaintances. In a letter to Miss Stevenson, giving her a pleasant account of this jaunt, he says of French manners: "The civilities we everywhere receive give us the strongest impressions of French politeness. It seems to be a point settled here universally that strangers are to be treated with respect; and one has the same deference shown him here by being a *stranger*, as in England by being a *lady*." His visit gratified him very much, and in the letter just mentioned he remarks that "travelling is one way of lengthening life, at least in appearance. It is but about a fortnight since we left London, but the variety of scenes we have gone through makes it seem equal to six months living in one place."

A recent act of Parliament laying duties on certain articles imported into the colonies, and providing for a board of commissioners to be sent out from England to collect those duties, with some other enactments taking from the colonial Assemblies their long-exercised privilege of fixing as well as paying the salaries of their governors, judges, and other officers, and transferring the fixing of the amount of such salaries to the king, had produced great excitement in the colonies. This power in the Assemblies had been useful in giving them some control over

the conduct of the officers in question. The action of Parliament in this matter gave them much dissatisfaction, and resolutions of a bold and high-toned character, recommending measures to encourage the products and manufactures of their own people and diminish the use of imports, were passed at Boston, which, on reaching England, roused the pride and embittered the animosity of the ministers and the party by which the acts in question had been passed, and embarrassed also the friends of a more liberal colonial policy. To appease the feelings thus exasperated by the Boston resolutions, and to give the English public a correct view of the state of sentiment in the colonies, Franklin wrote a valuable paper on the "Causes of the American Discontents before 1768," and had it published early in January, 1768, just as Parliament came together. Written in a cool and candid temper, it traced rapidly but clearly the progress of what the Americans deemed British encroachment; and contrasted, in a striking manner, the content of the colonies prior to the stamp-act, with their condition since: and its effect was such as to calm exasperation, for a time at least, and produce a somewhat more favorable disposition in regard to colonial interests.

The Boston resolutions, however, gave a strong impulse to the other colonies, which soon followed in the expression of similar sentiments. Franklin, writing to his son, the governor of New Jersey, on this subject, in December, 1767, says: "If our people should follow the Boston example, by entering into resolutions of frugality and industry, full as necessary for us as for them, I hope they will among other things give this reason: that it is to enable them more speedily to discharge their debts to Great Britain." This prudent and honest suggestion of Franklin harmonized, as it subsequently appeared, with the sentiments of Washington, who, when the people of

Virginia were advised to put a stop to both their imports and exports, with the design of procuring the repeal of the offensive laws, disapproved of the latter part of the proposition, though in favor of the former. "If we owe money in Great Britain," said he, "nothing but the last necessity can justify the non-payment of it; and I wish to see the other method first tried, which is legal, and will facilitate the payments."

The year 1768 opened with changes in the ministry. These proved unfavorable to the claims of the colonies, not only because some of the Grenville party took places, but more particularly because, in the department of colonial affairs, Lord Shelburne, who was friendly to America, and a man of even temper and easy of access, was superseded by Lord Hillsborough, who, though generally deemed a man of abilities and probity, was stiff in his opinions, pertinacious as to forms, liable to prejudice, of a capricious temper, and not easily accessible; and in addition to all this, to cite the authority of Mr. Johnson, the able and enlightened agent of Connecticut, the whole business of the colonies had necessarily to take new channels; new connections had to be formed; negotiations, which had made some progress, had all to be commenced anew, and great delays would be the consequence. Besides, when the question concerning the repeal of the act of Parliament forbidding the issue of paper-money in the colonies, was brought before the board of trade, in the previous year, Lord Hillsborough, then at the head of that board, had drawn a report strongly against the repeal solicited by the colonial agents, which report Franklin had answered in a paper of remarkable ability; and though his lordship, on taking charge of American affairs, treated Franklin with much civility, yet it became evident before long that the masterly answer of the colonial agent had not convinced the colonial

secretary. When, however, after his new appointment, Franklin waited on him, he admitted that the answer was an able one, and presented stronger reasons in favor of the currency in question than he had supposed to exist; and at the same interview, Franklin having explained to him the state of the question respecting the change petitioned for in the government of Pennsylvania, the new secretary told him he would examine the subject and confer with him upon it again. These and other circumstances gave rise to a rumor that Franklin was to be appointed under-secretary to Lord Hillsborough; on which the former remarks, in a letter to his son, that there was little likelihood of it, as it was a settled point that he was too much of an American.

A different proposition, however, was made to Franklin, which involved his removal as head of the American postoffice, and the proffer of some other appointment, which, though not mentioned, seems to have been intended to be such a one as would withdraw him from all direct connection with American affairs. But he neither felt nor showed any desire for office, being content with his position. Indeed, his removal from his place as deputy-postmaster-general of the colonies, would not have given him any chagrin, as he wrote to his son, if his "zeal for America" were to be the reason; in which, as he states, "some of my friends have hinted to me that I have been too open." To this he adds a remark that shows his foresight, at that early and comparatively tranquil day, of the inevitable result of the doctrines then held by the British government. "If Mr. Grenville," says he, "comes into power again, in any department respecting America, I must refuse accepting anything that may seem to put me in his power, because *I apprehend a breach between the two countries;*" adding—"If it were not for the flattering expectation that by being

here, I might more effectually serve my country, I should certainly determine for retirement, without a moment's hesitation."

Franklin's enemies in Pennsylvania endeavored to use this rumor of proffered ministerial favors, to his injury; but their efforts were unavailing. So strong was he in the confidence of his countrymen everywhere, that in the summer of 1768 he received from the governor of Georgia credentials of his appointment as agent for that colony; while every arrival from Pennsylvania and the northern colonies furnished fresh evidence of their growing esteem for him. The changes, however, in the ministry, which had taken place, and were anticipated, with the dissolution of Parliament and the new elections, had produced so much confusion and delay in public business, that, seeing no prospect of advancing the chief object of his mission, he was preparing to return to America when the appointment from Georgia reached him; and though his private affairs made him anxious to be at home, yet that appointment, together with the urgent expostulations of the friends of America, and a growing apprehension of the restoration of Mr. Grenville and his party to power, induced him to remain in England a few months longer; for, as he observed in a letter written in February, 1769, to Lord Kames, things were daily looking worse, with an increasing tendency "to a breach and final separation."

That this opinion was correct became still more evident in the ensuing spring. Near the end of April he wrote to a friend in Boston: "The Parliament remains fixed in the resolution not to repeal the duty acts this session, and will rise next Tuesday. I hope my countrymen will remain as fixed in their resolutions of industry and frugality, till these acts are repealed; and, if I could be sure of that, I should almost wish them never

to be repealed; being persuaded that we shall reap more solid and extensive advantages from the steady practice of those two great virtues, than we can suffer damage from all the duties Parliament can levy on us. They flatter themselves you can not subsist without their manufactures; that you have not virtue enough to persist in such agreements; that the colonies will desert one another, and return to the use of British fineries. The ministerial people all talk in this strain, and many even of the merchants. I have ventured to assert that they will all find themselves mistaken." His confidence in the firmness of his countrymen was well vindicated by their conduct; and from a letter to his sister, Mrs. Mecom, it is evident that the women of America were as resolute as the men: "The account you write," says he, "of the growing industry, frugality, and good sense of my countrywomen, gives me more pleasure than you can imagine; for from thence I presage great advantages to our country." He wrote to the same effect to the committee of merchants in Philadelphia, and that if the people would steadily persist in "using colony manufactures only, it would, he trusted, be the means, under God, of recovering and establishing the freedom of the country entire, and handing it down to posterity."

Franklin, who was ever intent on being useful, and had urged, on various occasions, and with much earnestness, the cultivation of silk in the colonies, sent, in September, 1769, to his friend and correspondent, Dr. Evans, of Philadelphia, an elaborate treatise, then recently published in France, on the management of silk-worms, with a letter from himself giving some account of the other processes in the production of silk and sending it to market. The British government had offered a bounty on the raw silk from the colonies, and Franklin believed them peculiarly well adapted to the production

of it. In his letter he expresses the opinion that, if the assembly of Pennsylvania would make some provision to encourage the planting of mulberry-trees in the province, the chief difficulty would be overcome. Silk he considered as "the happiest of all inventions for clothing." While wool requires much land for its production, the sheep yield but little food, compared to the quantity the same land would supply in grain; and that flax and hemp not only impoverish the richest soil, but they supply no food at all; while the mulberry-tree may be so planted as to take little or no land from other uses, and silken garments outwear all others. "Hence it is," says he, "that the most populous of all countries, China, clothes its inhabitants with silk, while it feeds them plentifully, and has besides a vast quantity of silk, both raw and manufactured, to spare for exportation."

Dr. Evans and some others in Pennsylvania, formed an association for the culture of silk, and persevered in their enterprise till they were constrained to relinquish it by the breaking out of the war for American independence.

On the 8th of November, 1769, the assembly of New Jersey unanimously appointed Franklin agent for that colony, making the third whose affairs with the British government were now placed in his charge. One of the more important matters thus committed to him was the procurement of the king's interposition for the rightful adjustment of the boundary line between East and West Jersey; and another, the most pressing of all, was his majesty's signature to an act of the assembly for issuing bills of credit, secured by funds pledged, by the same act, for their redemption, and to be put into circulation by loans of various amounts at an interest of five per cent. per annum, but not to be made a legal tender, against which there was a prohibitory act of Parliament,

passed two or three years before and applicable to all the colonies. The letter of instructions from the assembly's committee is brief, simply enumerating the several matters placed in his hands, accompanied by the remark that, "to a gentleman, whose inclination to serve the colonies was believed equal to his knowledge of their true interests, much need not be said to induce his attention to American concerns."

About the same time, also, Franklin received a letter from a Boston committee, transmitting a correspondence between them and Governor Bernard, General Gage, Commodore Hood, and the commissioners of customs, relating to the revenue act, and to the sentiments and conduct of the respective parties; the committee requesting Franklin to defend the Bostonians from the aspersions of the governor and the other crown officers mentioned, to whose arbitrary proceedings the troubles in that quarter were to be ascribed. Those officers and the British functionaries in other colonies, by misrepresenting the conduct of the colonists, misled both the Parliament and the ministry. Among other things, they affirmed in their despatches, that the combinations in America against importing and consuming British goods, were all breaking up; that the people, distressed by the want of such goods, could not refuse them much longer, and must shortly submit to such terms as Parliament might think fit to impose. To such accounts was attributed much of the obstinacy, with which the petitions from America for the repeal of the obnoxious revenue acts, were resisted in Parliament, and the tenacity with which the doctrine of absolute sovereignty over the colonies was maintained in that body; so that although the statements of the colonial agents and the actual return of ships from America with the very cargoes they had taken out, made some impression on the minds of the

more liberal members of Parliament, yet when, in April, 1770, the subject was brought forward in that body, the best bill that could be carried was one which repealed the duties, except that on tea, but still retaining the preamble of the former act, which asserted the unrestricted authority of Parliament to tax the colonies in all cases.

This measure was adopted on the avowed ground of conciliation, and the duty on tea was retained for the professed reason that it was not a British production; but the principle of the bill, nevertheless, remained the same; and it was that *principle* against which the objections of the colonies were mainly levelled. The new act, therefore, instead of satisfying and appeasing the American people, served only to alarm and exasperate them still more; for little tea being used at that period in the colonies, the duty on it was too petty an object for revenue, and the new act, therefore, left the real intention of Parliament to adhere to its claim of power, more palpable than ever; and the colonists, so far from dissolving their leagues against the consumption of British merchandise of any sort, gave those leagues fresh vigor and still wider efficiency.

The knowledge of this effect of the new act in the colonies soon went back to England; and as Franklin had been particularly conspicuous in asserting colonial rights, and as his letters to the leading patriots of America had been denounced as having produced much of the feeling exhibited by the people of the colonies, a rumor now began to spread that his office of deputy postmaster-general of the colonies was to be taken from him. The ministerial press in England became more abusive than ever, with the design, as he thought, of inducing him to relinquish the office by his own act; for, after all, ministers felt that their removal of him, as a punishment for the zeal and ability with which he had

served his own country, would not strengthen them, and they would willingly be saved from the odium of such a step.

Franklin, however, remained steadfast, and was not removed till a later period. His language on the occasion was firm and explicit. His political opinions, he said, had long been well known, and he could not be expected to change them every time the king might think fit to change his ministers; that in his letters to friends in America, as in all he had said and written in England, he had only done his duty to his country; and that no concern for office could alter his course, or his rule of doing what he deemed right, leaving results to Providence.

One of his American correspondents was the Rev. Samuel Cooper, of Boston, an able man, and a stanch patriot, from whom Franklin received much valuable information respecting the progress of events in the colonies, and to whom he communicated his own sentiments without reserve. From parts of this correspondence it seems plain that the more leading patriots of that day, in Boston, who were generally much younger men than Franklin, had not yet formed as profound and thoroughly-digested opinions as he had, of the true political relations of the two countries; and when they now perceived the full reach of his views, they were not only convinced of his sagacity, but they also saw, more clearly than ever, the importance of his position; and they wisely sought to strengthen it, not only for the sake of their own local interests, but also to aid the general cause of colonial rights. With these views the assembly of Massachusetts appointed him agent for that colony, on the 24th of October, 1770; and as the term was annual, he was reappointed every year during his residence in England.

Soon after receiving the certificate of his agency, Franklin waited on the secretary for the colonies, Lord Hillsborough, to present it, and acquaint him with the objects of his appointment. The behavior of his lordship at this interview, which took place on the 16th of January, 1771, exhibited a mixture of petulant anger and insolence as unbecoming as it was strange. When Franklin first presented himself he was received with due courtesy; but when he began to state the objects of his new agency, the moment he mentioned the name of Massachusetts, his lordship sneeringly cut him short, telling him he was *not* agent; and when Franklin replied that he had his credentials in his pocket, the secretary told him he was mistaken, for he had himself received a letter from Governor Hutchinson, stating that he (Hutchinson) had refused to sign the bill making the appointment. Franklin replied that no bill was necessary, as he was the assembly's agent, not the governor's, with whom he had nothing to do; and when his lordship summoned his under-secretary to bring forth the letter from Hutchinson, he found that no such letter had come, and that the letter actually received related to another matter. This mistake of the noble lord did not tend to smooth his temper, and, changing his ground, he went on to say, that no colonial assembly had any right to appoint an agent, by their own vote, independently of the governor, and that no colonial agents would thenceforth be regarded, unless appointed with the consent of the colonial governors; that he should not yield that point; and that if he was not supported in his determination, his office might be taken from him as soon as it was thought fit. To all these declarations, which were made with great heat, Franklin coolly replied, that, as the business intrusted to these agents was the people's, no consent was thought necessary on the part of a governor.

who was himself but an agent of the king, and did not represent the people. During this dialogue the noble lord worked himself into such a passion that he became very insolent; so that when Franklin took back his credentials, (which had not been even looked into,) he remarked, in a tone of indignation which he did not wish wholly to repress, that he believed it was "of no great importance whether his appointment was acknowledged or not, for," said he, "I have not the least idea that an agent can, *at present*, be of any use to any of the colonies; and I shall, therefore, give your lordship no further trouble"—and therewith left the chafing secretary.

It is easy to see that Lord Hillsborough's way for appointing agents, only by acts of assembly requiring the assent of the king's governors, would soon render such agents worthless to the colonies, by making them the mere tools of executive authority. Such a scheme, taken in connexion with that of rendering the governors wholly independent of the people of the colonies, by permanent salaries fixed by the crown, but paid out of the revenues collected from the same people, whose obedience was to be enforced by British troops quartered upon them, would shortly make assemblies superfluous, by placing all actual power in the hands of the king's officers. This policy of multiplying crown officers is noticed by Franklin in a letter to the Massachusetts committee of correspondence, dated May 15th, 1771, in which he traces the progress of aggression and resistance—of official rapacity and insolence, and of popular resentment and combination—finally to result in the bloody struggle of war—with a clearness of vision, a particularity and accuracy, more like history than prediction.

Early in the summer of 1771, Franklin visited several parts of England. On one of these excursions he passed three weeks with the family of Dr. Shipley, bishop of

St. Asaph, then residing in Hampshire; and it was while there that he wrote the first portion of his autobiography, extending it to the year 1731. In August of the same year he travelled through Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. During his stay in Dublin, the Irish Parliament assembled, and he was treated with much distinction by leading men of both parties. At a great dinner given by the lord-lieutenant, Franklin met Lord Hillsborough, who, much to his surprise, was uncommonly civil; and pressed him and his fellow-traveller, Mr. Jackson, when they should proceed on their journey for the north of Ireland, to call on him. They did so, and were most hospitably entertained by that very capricious nobleman. In Scotland, he visited Glasgow, passed several days with Lord Kames, at his residence near Stirling, and stayed near three weeks in Edinburgh, as the guest of Mr. Hume, gratified with the attentions he received and with the general character of society in the Scottish capital.

At the opening of 1772, Franklin thought seriously of returning to America. In a letter of January 30th, to his son, he speaks of his strong desire to be at home; of his age, and the infirmities which might reasonably be anticipated at his age, being then nearly sixty-seven, and of the importance of arranging his private affairs before his death. He saw, moreover, no disposition in Parliament to intermeddle any further, for a time at least, with the colonies; and that, even should he return to England again, he might be absent for a year without prejudice to colonial interests. The desire of his friends, however, that he should not leave while Parliament was in session, the arrival of new despatches from America, and particularly the retirement of Lord Hillsborough from office, which shortly after took place, induced him to defer his return.

Lord Hillsborough's resignation of his post as secretary for the colonies and president of the board of trade, is ascribed to his having been defeated in a favorite plan, in the privy council, through the agency of Franklin. Some years before, a scheme had been broached for establishing a new colony in the Ohio country, and an application for a grant of territory for the purpose had been made on behalf of an association, at the head of which was Thomas Walpole. To this grant Lord Hillsborough was strongly opposed, as it conflicted with a project of his own to prevent the extension of the colonial settlements beyond the Alleganies and the sources of such streams as flow into the Atlantic. When the petition for the Walpole grant, as it was called, came before the board of trade, to be considered and reported to the privy council, Lord Hillsborough strenuously opposed it, and made a report to that effect, which the board adopted and sent, with the petition, to the council, which had the ultimate disposal of all such matters. Before the petition was acted on by the council, Franklin prepared a reply to the report, exposing its fallacies and presenting so full and masterly an argument in favor of the petition, that the council was convinced by it and made the grant. At this decision Lord Hillsborough took umbrage and resigned his office.

The policy of encouraging western settlements had been urged by Franklin many years before, particularly in his celebrated Canada pamphlet, which embraced many of the leading considerations presented in favor of this grant. But though this plan of colonizing beyond the Alleganies was now sanctioned by his majesty's council, yet the execution of it was so delayed, that the revolution put an end to the whole enterprise.

During the same year, the Royal Society, at the suggestion of the ministry, appointed a committee to visit

the extensive public magazines for storing powder, at Purfleet, in the vicinity of London, with the view of recommending the best mode of protecting them from lightning. The committee consisted of five of the most eminent electricians of the society, of whom Franklin was one; and he drew the report, which recommended the use of pointed conductors. To satisfy the committee of the correctness of the principles on which he based his recommendation, he performed a set of experiments; and the result was, that all his associates united with him in signing the report, except Mr. Wilson, who was in favor of rods ending with knobs. The principles applicable to both forms having been already stated, it needs only be said here that pointed rods were preferred for the very reason urged against them; that is, inasmuch as they attract the electric element further than knobs, they act upon it at a greater distance, drawing it off gradually, without overcharging the rod, which thus conducts it safely to the ground; whereas blunt rods, by permitting the nearer approach of the element before acting on it, are liable to receive it in too great quantities for the safe transmission of it to the earth.

Though Franklin was unable to advance the political business with which he had been charged, yet his position, in other respects, was very agreeable. His great abilities and illustrious character brought around him the distinguished men of the times; and he moved in the most enlightened and respectable circle of society. Men of learning from the continent uniformly brought introductions to him; foreign diplomatists cultivated his acquaintance; and in August, 1772, the Royal Academy at Paris elected him one of its foreign associates — an honor the more marked, from the fact that the whole number of its associates of that class was restricted to eight.

With the commencement of 1773, however, colonial affairs attracted renewed attention. The British government had recently adopted the policy of fixing the salaries of the colonial governors, judges, and other officers, paying them from the revenue supplied by those very taxes which were levied without the consent of the colonies. This new step gave great dissatisfaction to the Americans. It was removing their only hold on the good-will or the personal interest of the crown officers, who, while they received their salaries from the colonies, were supplied with a powerful motive to exercise their functions with a more discreet and just regard to the rights of the people within their jurisdiction. Such was the excitement produced by this new measure, particularly in Massachusetts, that the assembly of that colony, and the people of all the towns in town-meeting, passed resolutions and adopted petitions, in which they remonstrated against it in the strongest and boldest language. These proceedings were sent to Franklin, as agent of the colony, with instructions to lay them before the privy council.

Lord Dartmouth, who had succeeded the earl of Hillsborough as colonial secretary, being the minister with whom colonial business was transacted, Franklin not only placed the proceedings mentioned in his hands, but he had them printed in a pamphlet, for general circulation, with a preface from his own pen, explaining, in a brief historical sketch, to use his own words, "the grounds of a dissension, that possibly may, sooner or later, have consequences interesting to all."

In the course of 1773, Franklin published two remarkable pieces, one entitled, "Rules for reducing a great Empire to a small one;" and the other, "An Edict by the King of Prussia;" both relating to the controversy between Great Britain and America, and

both written in a vein of irony not surpassed in pungent sarcasm since the days of Swift, yet presenting, at the same time, the argument against the policy pursued by the British government, with equal force and adroitness. In the former piece he digests the obnoxious acts of the royal government, into the form of rules to be observed for the purpose mentioned, and shows how certain they are to accomplish that purpose, by stating, in the form of necessary consequences, what had actually taken place in the colonies, their existing condition, the character and tendency of opinion among their people, and the inevitable result. In the edict, he supposes the king of Prussia to be the head of the German or Saxon race, and that England, having been settled by portions of that race, who migrated thither under Hengist, Horsa, and other leaders, and the settlements thus made having long flourished under the protection of Prussia, for which protection and the great expense and trouble attending it, those English colonies had not yet made to their gracious sovereign any adequate and just indemnification, his majesty, therefore, imposes export and import duties on his British subjects, for the more easy collection of which, all British vessels bound to or from any part of the globe, are required to touch and unlade at Koningsberg; all manufactures, also, are forbidden among his British subjects, even of their own natural productions, which must be taken to Prussia to be fabricated; and, after commanding that all Prussian convicts shall be taken to his British islands for the better peopling thereof, his majesty assumes that the regulations of his edict will be deemed "just and reasonable" by his "much-favored colonists in England," inasmuch as they had all been *copied* from various acts of their own Parliament (which are distinctly cited), and from instructions issued by their own princes, for the "good

government of their own colonies in Ireland and America;" and the edict concludes with making it high treason to resist any of its provisions, for which the traitors are to be carried in fetters to Prussia, to be tried and executed.

These pieces attracted much attention. Franklin was not suspected of being the author of them, except by one or two intimate friends; and he heard them spoken of occasionally, particularly the *Edict*, as the severest piece of satire that had appeared for a long time.

During the summer of 1773, Franklin made an excursion to the northern counties of England, and while at Keswick, in Cumberland, on visiting the shore of the beautiful lake called Derwent Water, for the gratification of the gentleman with him, he smoothed its ruffled surface with oil. The experiment was easily performed, for he usually carried a small quantity of oil in the head of a bamboo cane, and a few drops answered the purpose. But political affairs chiefly engrossed his time and thoughts; and they were fast assuming a more serious aspect. The resolutions and remonstrances of the assembly and the towns of Massachusetts had given fresh energy to the feeling in America. In March, 1773, the Virginia house of burgesses appointed a committee of correspondence, inviting the other colonies to do the same; and preparation for securing unity of action as well as sentiment was everywhere going forward. Before the prorogation of Parliament in the summer of the same year, the king's answer to the various petitions from the colonies, and the haughty tone of that answer, served only to give greater firmness to the attitude they had taken, for it showed that his majesty had at length openly united with Parliament in asserting their right to bind the colonies by their laws, "in all cases whatso-

ever." In a letter to Mr. Cushing, dated July 7th, 1773, Franklin, after stating the substance of the answer, proceeds to consider the position in which it placed the colonies. He urges, with great force, the necessity of united action on their part, and a common assertion of their rights; and without assuming to direct the precise form in which they should combine for this purpose, observes, that it might be wisest for the colonies, "in a general congress now in peace to be assembled, or by means of the correspondence lately proposed, after a full and solemn declaration of their rights, to engage firmly with each other that they will never grant aid to the crown in any general war, till those rights are recognised by the king and Parliament," and send their declaration to the king. Such a step, he thought, would bring the matter to a crisis; and if force should be used to compel obedience, it would only strengthen our union, and procure the good opinion of the world.

Franklin, however, like the wiser and more considerate of his compatriots, while he would have the rights of the colonies boldly asserted and firmly maintained, recommended moderate and prudent action. He, as well as they, deemed the colonies not yet ripe for an open rupture; that a premature struggle would cripple them, and delay, in fact, the full establishment of their freedom; and that if the British government would concede their rights and treat them justly, the connexion between the two countries could be continued, at least for some years longer, to the benefit of both. Such counsels were, in truth, followed by the colonies; but no arguments, no considerations of sound policy, no respect for charters, no regard for the great principles of British constitution itself, as applicable to British subjects wherever resident, controlled the action of the British government; and events took place on both sides

of the Atlantic, in 1774, which gave a still sharper edge to existing animosities.

In December, 1772, a packet of letters was placed in Franklin's hands, by an Englishman of high standing, whose name has not been made known, but who gave him express permission to send them to America. These letters have been usually referred to as the *Hutchinson Letters*, and had been written by Hutchinson, while he was chief-justice of Massachusetts, by Lieutenant-Governor Oliver, and some other tories of Boston, to Thomas Whately, secretary to George Grenville, the author of the stamp-act, while he was at the head of the British cabinet. As the letters were written at Boston, Franklin, being then agent for Massachusetts, sent them, in December, 1772, to Mr. Cushing, speaker of the Massachusetts Assembly, stating, in the letter with which he transmitted them, that he was not at liberty to tell from whom he received them, and that they were neither to be printed nor copied, but might be shown to some of the leading patriots for their satisfaction, and that those very letters had mainly instigated those acts of the British government which the colonies regarded as their principal grievances.

The letters reached their destination, and after being exhibited to various individuals, were laid before the Assembly of Massachusetts, and ultimately printed, by order of that body, as being of great public importance, and as having been written, as their contents proved, to effect public objects. After full consideration of the letters, the Assembly passed some very pointed resolutions in relation to the writers and the public evils produced by their instrumentality, and adopted a petition to the king, asking that the offices of Hutchinson and Oliver, then governor and lieutenant-governor of the colony, might be taken from them.

When this affair became public in London, it led to a quarrel between Mr. William Whately, brother and executor of Thomas, to whom it was supposed the letters had been addressed, and a Mr. John Temple, who had been an intimate friend of Thomas Whately; and as the quarrel threatened a fatal issue, Franklin, to prevent it, and to relieve both those gentlemen from the suspicion of a breach of trust to which their relations to the deceased Thomas Whately had exposed them, sent a card, in his own name, to the Public Advertiser, acquitting them both of all agency in the matter, and avowing himself as the person who had obtained and transmitted the letters to America, though he still remained faithful to the secret of the individual from whom he had received them.

This magnanimous conduct of Franklin, however, served only to bring upon him the whole tribe of ministerial writers in fiercer assault than ever; and it was arranged that, when the Massachusetts petition for the removal of Hutchinson and Oliver should come before the committee of the lords of the privy council, those two functionaries should be heard by counsel against the petition. It was no part of the reason for this procedure that Hutchinson and Oliver were in any danger of removal; for, composed as the council was, they would have been safe against the petitions of united America. But the real object was to give an opportunity for a direct public attack on Franklin, in the hope of bringing odium upon him for his connection with the letters, and thus undermining his political influence as a champion of colonial rights. The person employed for this dishonorable purpose was the Solicitor-general Wedderburn, (afterward Lord Loughborough,) a man of malignant temper, and in high repute for his powers of sarcasm and bitter invective. And these qualities, to the disgrace, not

of Franklin, but of their possessor and those who so meanly permitted the employment of them, were allowed the utmost license.

Franklin, though deeply indignant at the coarse insults heaped upon him and the people he represented, bore himself with a steady and composed dignity worthy of his great character, and the malice of his assailants recoiled upon themselves in the general disgust excited by their conduct. The committee, as a matter of course, reported against the petition, denouncing it as groundless, scandalous, and seditious, and affirming the integrity and honor of the authors of the letters, from whom the people they belied had suffered so much injury. The report was promptly adopted by the privy council; and the next day Franklin was removed from the colonial postoffice department, the revenue of which he had raised from nothing to nearly three thousand pounds yearly, and which, not long after his removal, fell to nothing again. Both these proceedings are good specimens of the fatuity of the British policy toward the colonies; and, to use the words of a patriot who witnessed what has just been related, "who can wonder at the indignation of the American people, or that the battle of Bunker hill was fought in less than eighteen months afterward?"

The occurrences just related took place in January, 1774; and other events which soon succeeded tended to bring the dispute between the two countries rapidly to a crisis. Franklin's self-respect, after the ignominious treatment he had received, did not permit him to hold any further intercourse with the ministry; and some of his friends believed his stay in England involved so much hazard to his personal liberty, that they advised him to secure his papers and withdraw. But others, friends of the colonies, urged him to await the action of the Amer-

ican congress, which assembled that year, for the first time, in Philadelphia; and in the hope that he might still be of some service, though acting only in a private capacity, he consented to remain. In December, 1774, the petition from Congress was sent to him, with a letter in which the colonial agents in London were requested to unite in presenting it. Franklin, Bollan, and Lee, however, were the only three who acted. They took it to Lord Dartmouth, the colonial secretary, and subsequently, when, with other papers, it had been laid on the table of the house of commons, they asked to be heard in support of it, at the bar of the house. This was denied, however, and the petition was subsequently rejected by a great majority. A little before leaving England, an effort was made by several of the more zealous friends of the colonies, to devise some means of conciliation between the British government and the colonies. To this end various interviews were held between Franklin, Lord Howe, the earl of Chatham, and other eminent whigs; and Franklin, at the request of the principal persons concerned, presented his views, at much length and in various forms, of the principles on which harmony might be restored and the connexion between the two countries permanently settled to the advantage of both. This unofficial and private negotiation continued for some weeks; but though the parties engaged were very sincere, and though Lord Chatham, after several conferences with Franklin, prepared a plan of conciliation which he moved in the house of lords on the 31st of January, 1775, and supported with a powerful speech, yet the hostility of the ministers to the colonies was so strong that "all availed," says Franklin, "no more than the whistling of the winds, and the plan was rejected." During the debate, however, Franklin received ample compensation for the contumely of Wedderburn.

Lord Sandwich, one of the ministry, opposed even the reception of the plan for consideration; and having, in the course of an intemperate and most unstatesmanlike speech against it, made some bitter allusions to Franklin, who was present, Lord Chatham, in his reply, took occasion to say, that, were the settlement of this great question devolved on him as the first minister of the government, he should not hesitate to seek the aid of "a person so perfectly acquainted with American affairs as the gentleman so injuriously reflected on; one whom all Europe held in high estimation for his knowledge and wisdom, and ranked with our Boyles and Newtons; who was an honor, not to the English nation only, but to human nature."

Other whig noblemen besides the Lords Chatham and Howe, and some even of the tory lords not of the cabinet, regarded Franklin with great respect for his personal character not less than for his knowledge; while, among the men most eminent at that day for learning and philanthropy, his admirers were so numerous as abundantly to compensate him by their friendship and society for the enmity of the enemies of his country; and with this treasure of esteem and honor gathered from every nation in Europe, he left London on the 21st of March, 1775, after a continued residence there of a little more than ten years, for Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DEATH OF HIS WIFE — CONGRESS AND PUBLIC BUSINESS — MISSION TO FRANCE — RESIDENCE AT PARIS — RETURN TO AMERICA — CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES — DEATH AND CHARACTER OF FRANKLIN.

A FEW weeks before sailing from England, the sorrowful news reached Franklin of the death of his wife. For several months she had felt her health sinking, and on the 14th of December, 1774, she was seized with paralysis, which she survived only five days. This event filled Franklin with poignant grief. Her good sense and native kindness of heart, her discreet management, not only of household affairs, but of his business in his absence, with her placid and even temper, and her rational and sober yet hopeful views of life, had greatly endeared her to him, and made his home peculiarly attractive. In many respects their native qualities and traits of character were much alike, and with the solid materials for domestic felicity which both were able and ever ready to contribute, their forty-four years of wedlock passed in mutual affection and unbroken harmony, and the survivor deeply mourned his bereavement.

Franklin reached home on the evening of May 5th, 1775; and the very next day the Assembly of Pennsylvania, then in session, appointed him a delegate to the second Continental Congress, which was to convene in Philadelphia four days after. The people of America

had everywhere become exasperated beyond all further forbearance. The blood of their countrymen had been wantonly shed by British troops, at Lexington and Concord, in April, and the call to arms was now ringing through the land.

When Congress met, a few timid men still hesitated at the idea of war with so powerful a foe as Great Britain, but the great majority were ready and eager for the conflict; and though they consented that one more appeal should be made to the justice of the British government, by petitioning the king, yet they did so merely to conciliate their hesitating brethren, while, at the same time, they promptly voted to prepare for defence, and pressed the preparation with vigor.

Never before had Franklin been so loaded with public business. The Pennsylvania Assembly made him chairman of the committee of safety for that province; and Congress placed him at the head of its secret committee authorized to procure and distribute arms and other munitions of war. A new postoffice establishment, also, was necessary, and the arduous task of arranging it was committed to Franklin alone, with exclusive authority over the whole subject. The department of Indian affairs for the middle colonies was placed under his superintendence, and he served on the committees on commerce, on the organization of a war department, on the terms of treaties to be offered to foreign nations, and various others.

Several of the posts thus assigned to him involved an active and extensive correspondence, not only within the colonies, but with many persons in foreign countries, requiring great caution and an accurate knowledge of the channels of communication in Europe, to preserve the objects of Congress from becoming known to a vigilant enemy almost everywhere present. In the midst of

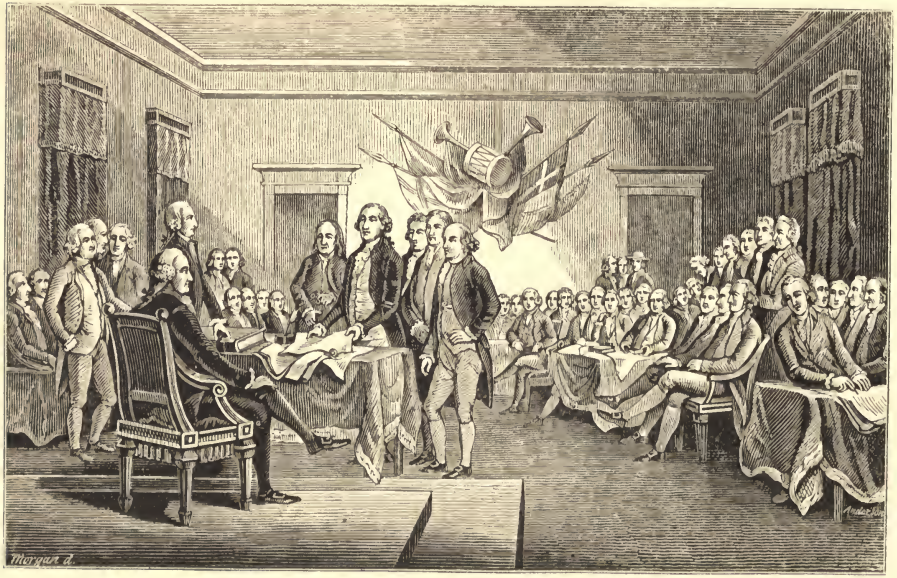
Washington and the Commissioners at Cambridge.

all this labor, moreover, feeling as all other reflecting men did, the vital importance of some general political organization less dependent than Congress then was, on the merely spontaneous action of separate colonial Assemblies, and endowed with self-sustaining power sufficient to abide the vicissitudes of the coming struggle, Franklin prepared a plan of confederacy, which, on the 21st of July, 1775, on his own motion, he laid before Congress. This plan vested the general powers of the proposed confederacy in a single legislative body or congress; and the executive and administrative functions in a council, to consist of one member from each colony, appointed by the Congress. Though the plan was not adopted, it brought the subject up, and it may be regarded as the germ of the confederation, under which the thirteen states subsequently organized themselves.

In October of the same year Congress sent Franklin, with two other members, Thomas Lynch and Benjamin Harrison, to consult and arrange with Washington, then at the camp in Cambridge, a plan for the maintenance of an army; and on his return he found himself again a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, having been elected in Philadelphia in his absence. The importance of maintaining a political correspondence with the friends of America in Europe, particularly with a view to such alliances as might become necessary, was strongly felt in Congress, and near the end of November that body organized a committee of secret correspondence. For this, Franklin's high standing and wide acquaintance in Europe peculiarly fitted him; and being placed on it, he opened the intended correspondence in a letter of the 9th of December, 1775, to Charles W. F. Dumas, a very learned man, particularly versed in the law of nations, and a Swiss by birth, with whom Franklin had become intimately acquainted in Holland.

Mr. Dumas, in a recent letter to Franklin, had expressed the warmest approval of the cause of the colonies, and assured him of the general good wishes of Europe; and as he had long resided at the Hague, in the midst of distinguished diplomatists from all quarters of the continent, Franklin gave him a sketch of the existing condition of America, its strength, resources, and prospects; suggested that Congress might find it necessary to seek assistance, or alliances, and requested him to ascertain, if he could, what would be the disposition of the principal European cabinets in regard to such applications, should they be made; urging, at the same time, the importance of circumspection, and pointing out a safe channel of communication. Mr. Dumas undertook the agency proposed, and rendered valuable service throughout the struggle for American independence.

In the spring of 1776, Congress sent Franklin, Charles Carroll, and Samuel Chase, on a mission to Canada, with power to direct the operations of the American forces in that province, and with the hope of inducing the Canadians to unite in the existing struggle for colonial rights. But the mission was fruitless; and when Franklin got back to Philadelphia, early in June, he found Congress occupied with a far more momentous subject. This was the declaration of independence. On this point public opinion was in advance of the action of Congress. This was right. It was wise and just in that body to wait for the clear expression of public sentiment, on so grave a question. But that sentiment had now become fixed, and Congress acted on it promptly. The committee, consisting of Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Livingston, appointed in June to draw a declaration, reported on the 1st of July; and after a debate of three days, the report, as drawn by Jefferson, with a few clauses modified at the suggestion



Declaration of Independence, reported July 1, 1776.

of Franklin and Adams, was, on the 4th, by an almost unanimous vote, adopted, declaring the colonies to be free and independent states.

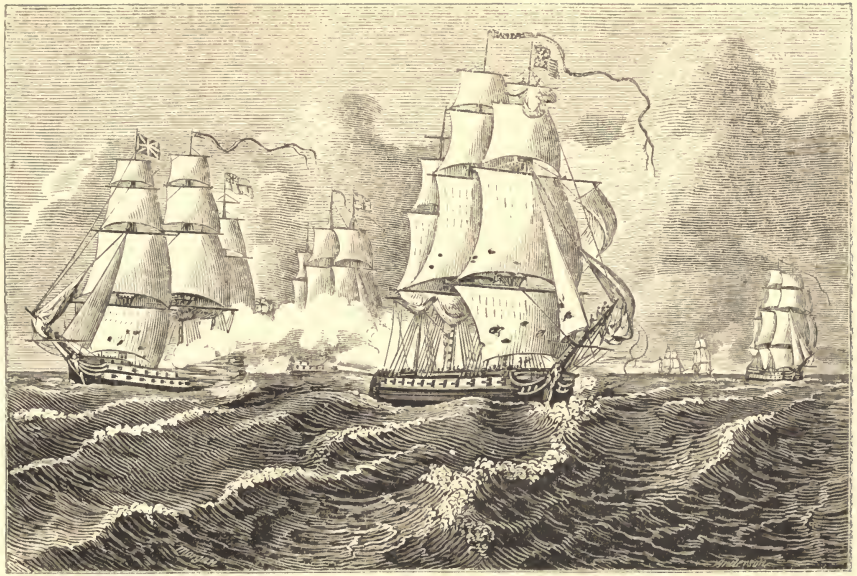
In the preceding May, Congress had proposed to the several colonies to remodel their own constitutions, to enable them to meet the new exigencies of the country. Accordingly, in July a convention, to frame a constitution for Pennsylvania, met in Philadelphia, and chose Franklin president. Though his labors were divided between his various posts, yet his influence in the convention was weighty, and its ultimate decision in favor of a legislature consisting of one house only, is ascribed to him. His objections to a legislature with two branches were derived partly from what he had seen of colonial Assemblies and legislative councils under royal governors, and partly from the history of the English Parliament. He did not, perhaps, sufficiently appreciate the difference between a legislature having one of its branches hereditary and constituting a distinct order in the state, and one wholly elective, in a commonwealth exempted from all the influences, direct and indirect, of the hereditary element, as well as from the prerogatives and patronage of a king. At any rate, no other instance of a legislature consisting of a single house has occurred in this country; and when Pennsylvania, at a subsequent period, reconstructed her constitution, she followed the general example.

Shortly after the declaration of independence by Congress, Lord Howe arrived in the bay of New York with a British fleet; and being commissioned, together with his brother, General Howe, to settle the dispute between the two countries, if the colonies would return to their allegiance, he published a manifesto to that effect, and wrote to Franklin, assuring him of his earnest desire to see harmony restored. A short correspondence

ensued between them; and though Howe was not permitted to recognise the authority of Congress, yet, as he communicated his wish to confer with some of its members on the terms upon which existing difficulties might be adjusted, that body, early in September, deputed Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, to meet him, to learn the nature and extent of his authority, and to receive such propositions as he might think fit to offer. The meeting took place on Staten Island, and though Lord Howe said much of the disposition of the king and his ministers to listen to the complaints of the colonies and redress their grievances, if they would return to their obedience, yet his propositions were unaccompanied by any distinct pledges of his majesty's good faith, and too vague to be relied on.

Although the interview, in reference to its direct object amounted to nothing, yet, indirectly, the result of it was doubtless important; for the publication of the whole procedure, which was forthwith ordered by Congress, showed the American people how idle it was to expect anything from the voluntary justice of the British government; and that they must look, for the rescue of their liberties, only to their own union, courage, and resources, without which they could neither protect themselves in the outset, nor receive future aid from foreign alliances.

To the means of obtaining such alliances Congress now turned its attention. The commerce of the country was valuable, and with the offer of that on liberal terms, as an equivalent for the assistance needed, a mission to France was determined on. The commissioners first appointed for this purpose, on the 26th of September, were Franklin, Silas Dean, and Thomas Jefferson. The last, however, declined, and Arthur Lee, of Virginia, was put in his place. Mr. Lee and Mr. Dean were



The Reprisal, Capt. Wicks, chased by a British Cruiser

both in Europe, the former having been employed several years in England as a colonial agent, and the latter having been sent out, in the preceding March, by the committee of secret correspondence, with a view to diplomatic as well as commercial objects; and Franklin, after a boisterous voyage in the United States sloop-of-war *Reprisal*, Captain Wickes, and after escaping from the guns of several Britsh cruisers, met them in Paris in the latter part of December, 1776.

With a fame unequalled in brilliancy by that of any other man of those times, not only as a philosopher and sage, but as a profound political thinker and an undaunted asserter of the rights and liberties of his country, Franklin's name was now familiarly known and revered throughout all Europe. Portraits of him were everywhere multiplied, of all forms and dimensions, from the size of life down to the smallest miniatures for snuff-boxes and rings, and all, young and old, of all ranks and of both sexes, felt it a privilege to obtain admission to his presence. Such were the accompaniments of Franklin's arrival at the capital of France.

Of the effect produced by Franklin's character, reputation, and personal appearance, in France, we may cite the testimony of an eminent French writer, who represents him as accomplishing the objects of his mission, not so much by direct negotiation with the court, as by the impression he made on the public mind; for while diplomatic etiquette allowed only occasional interviews with ministers of state, he was in constant intercourse with all who were distinguished for genius, learning, or social influence, and who swayed political opinion. "In him," says Lacretelle, the writer alluded to, "men imagined they saw a sage of antiquity, come back to give austere lessons and generous examples to the moderns. They personified in him the republic of which he was the rep-

resentative. They regarded his virtues as those of his countrymen; and even judged of their physiognomy by the imposing and serene traits of his own. This venerable man, they said, joined to the demeanor of Phocion the spirit of Socrates." To this vivid sketch of the impression made on French susceptibilities, by the rare combination of great talents and splendid reputation, with the simple yet dignified manners, plain garb, and paternal aspect of the venerable representative of the new-born nation, the same writer adds: "After this picture, it would be useless to trace the history of Franklin's negotiations with the court of France. His virtues and his renown negotiated for him; and before the second year of his mission had expired, no one conceived it possible to refuse fleets and an army to the compatriots of Franklin."

Congress had sent with Franklin a draught of a commercial treaty, which he had himself, no doubt, helped to frame, inasmuch as he was early placed on a committee of that body, for the purpose of framing the model of such a treaty, and besides offering it to the acceptance of the French cabinet, the commissioners were instructed to apply for eight ships-of-the-line fully manned and equipped; to purchase arms and other warlike stores; to fit out armed cruisers in the French ports, with the permission of the government; and to sound the representatives at Paris of other European cabinets, respecting their recognition of the independence of the United States, and the establishment of commercial relations with them. The expenses of the commissioners and the fulfilment of their contracts were to be provided for by shipments of produce.

When the commissioners first met in Paris, the French court were not quite ready to take part with their country openly. The principal reason for this hesitancy

seems to have been the fact that it would instantly produce war with Great Britain, for which France, it was said, had not yet made sufficient preparation; and although the counts de Vergennes and Maurepas, regarded as the two most influential members of the French cabinet, held that the interests of France demanded such a war, and that it would be unwise to neglect the opportunity now offered to embark in it, yet some of their colleagues thought differently, and the king himself, it is stated, was reluctant to give it his sanction. Besides, not a little doubt was still entertained respecting the general sentiments of the American people. They had not yet, it was urged, given sufficient evidence of their firmness, or their determination to persevere, at all hazards, in maintaining the position they had taken; the reverses and misfortunes of the campaign of 1776, which had just closed with but gloomy prospects for the future, might have broken their spirit and crushed their hopes, or at least have so far changed their views as to induce them, upon some concessions from the British government, to return to their former connection; and that it would be exceedingly imprudent in France to commit herself prematurely to a cause thus doubtfully situated.

But, with all this caution and seeming hesitancy, the French cabinet had determined to assist the United States, and had, accordingly, soon after Mr. Deane's arrival at Paris in the preceding July, advanced a million livres from the royal treasury. This, however, was done privately, by placing the money in the hands of M. Beaumarchais, who, in concert with Mr. Deane, made large shipments of military stores to America.

Such was the position of things, when, on the 28th of December, 1776, seven days after Franklin reached Paris, Count de Vergennes, the minister of foreign affairs, gave the American commissioners their first audi-

ence at Versailles. After an interview every way gratifying, they left with the count a copy of the treaty they had been directed to propose; and, at his request, a memorial was delivered to him a few days afterward, drawn up by Franklin, and exhibiting the state of affairs in America, the sentiments of the people, the resources of the country, the value of her commerce, and the views of Congress.

Though the application for ships-of-the-line was not complied with, yet a further sum of two million livres, to be drawn quarterly, was soon placed, in the same private manner as before, at the disposal of the commissioners, with the intimation that repayment was not expected till after the war; and they were also permitted to make a special contract with the farmers-general of the revenue for another million, to be met by remittances of tobacco. The money thus furnished was expended in purchasing and sending to America clothing, arms, and other munitions of war, and in refitting American cruisers. Those cruisers, moreover, brought many prizes into French ports, the sale of which was winked at, till the British embassador remonstrated against it; and then, although the commissioners were gravely admonished on the subject, and put to some trouble in detaining vessels ready to sail with stores for America, or in transferring their lading to other vessels, yet this interposition was not so peremptory as materially to impede the despatch of supplies.

In March, 1777, Franklin received from Congress a commission as minister to Spain. A little money had been secretly obtained in that quarter; but, on learning from the Spanish embassador at Paris that the court of Spain, though friendly, was not yet disposed to appear in open alliance with the United States, he deferred acting under his new commission further than to communi-

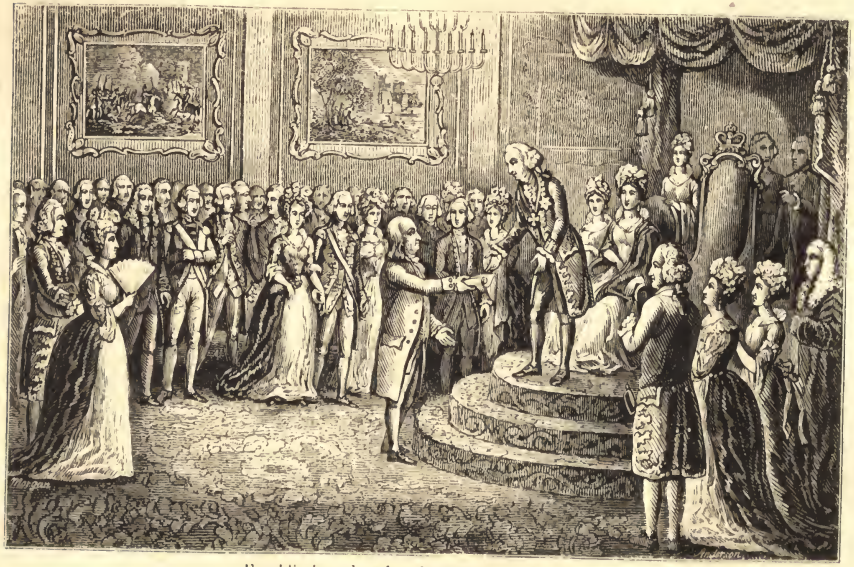
cate to that court, through its embassador, the fact of his appointment and the main articles of the treaty he was instructed to propose, which contemplated a triple alliance for repairing the losses of Spain and France in the previous war, by restoring to the former her footing in Florida, and to the latter her possessions in the West Indies, while the United States were to secure their independence and the free navigation of the Mississippi.

The results of the campaign of 1777 in America, however, put an end to the reserve and hesitancy of the French court, and changed the aspect of negotiation. The news of Burgoyne's surrender reached Paris early in December; and on the 6th of February, 1778, the independence of the United States was acknowledged, and two treaties, one of amity and commerce and the other of alliance, were signed at Versailles by the French minister and the American commissioners. Writing a few days after to a friend in America, to congratulate him on the completion of the treaties, Franklin says of the former, that it was framed "on the plan proposed by Congress, with some good additions;" and of the latter, that it "guaranties to the United States their sovereignty and independence absolute and unlimited, with all the possessions they may have at the close of the war," while they "guaranty in return the possessions of France in the West Indies;" and that "the great principle in both is a perfect equality and reciprocity: no advantage to be demanded by France, or privileges in commerce, which the States may not grant to any and every other nation."

As the execution of the treaties drew after it, of course, the official and public recognition of the American commissioners in their diplomatic character, they were, on the 20th of March, presented in due form to the king, and were received thenceforward at the French court as the representatives of a sovereign state. The presenta-

tion of no embassador of royalty, however splendid in garb and retinue, could have produced a sensation so lively as that which accompanied on this occasion the plain republican envoy Benjamin Franklin. "His straight, unpowdered hair," says Madame Campan — "his round hat, and his brown cloth coat, formed a singular contrast with the laced and embroidered coats, and powdered and perfumed heads of the courtiers of Versailles." And another French writer in describing the scene says: "His age, his venerable aspect, the simplicity of his dress, everything fortunate and remarkable in his life, contributed to excite public attention. The clapping of hands and other expressions of joy indicated that warmth of enthusiasm which the French are more susceptible of than any other people, and the charm of which is enhanced to the object of it by their politeness and agreeable manners. After his audience he crossed the courtyard on his way to the office of the minister of foreign affairs. The multitude waited for him in the passage, and greeted him with acclamations; and he met with a similar reception wherever he appeared in Paris."

The execution of the treaties was quickly followed by the appointment of M. Gerard embassador from the court of France to the United States, who sailed in April with a fleet under Count d'Estaing, with whom also Mr. Deane, who had been replaced by John Adams, returned to America. The new alliance, moreover, together with the existing aspect of the war, so far influenced the British ministers, that they sent out commissioners to the United States, with professions of a sincere desire to restore harmony between the two countries, upon terms advantageous to both. But, however willing they may have been to escape from a costly and odious war, it was evident that their notions of justice, of American rights and British supremacy, were little improved. Indeed,



Franklin introduced to the King at Versailles.

the only propositions they had to offer were so leavened with the old ideas of royal prerogative and parliamentary omnipotence, as to be wholly inadmissible; and they served rather to exasperate than reconcile those to whom they were addressed.

Besides this formal mission to Congress, various efforts were made, on the part of the British ministry, by the employment of secret emissaries, to entangle Franklin in private negotiation, and thus through him to embroil his country with the French court by exciting suspicion and sowing dissension. But Franklin's sagacity at once detected the motive of these movements; while his straight-forward sincerity, his steadfast integrity, and his close intimacy with the French minister, between whom and himself, so far as the interests of America were concerned, there were no secrets, baffled every effort to produce jealousy, or to weaken in the slightest degree the confidence they reposed in each other. Indeed, the wisdom and sound policy of perfect frankness, and scorn of everything like intrigue, was never more triumphantly vindicated, in diplomatic intercourse, than by the influence which Franklin acquired in the court of France.

Of all these clandestine attempts to draw Franklin into the schemes of British intrigue, the most remarkable, alike for profligacy and folly, was made by a person, doubtless an Englishman, but who styled himself Charles de Weissenstein, in a long communication, dated at Brussels in July, 1778, but written probably in Paris. He attempted to intimidate, by magnifying the power of Great Britain; to bribe, by presenting the prospect of honors and wealth; and to propitiate, by professions of personal admiration and reverence. He insisted that no British ministry would ever recognise the independence of the United States, and that the war therefore would be continued till America was ruined. To prevent the

unavailing waste of life and treasure, he proposed a plan of conciliation and government, which, though it asserted the unlimited authority of Parliament over the colonies, would, for the sake of peace and commerce, make such concessions in regard to the exercise of that authority as would be equitable and satisfactory; and the rewards which Franklin, Washington, and the other leading American patriots, were to receive, for restoring peace and happiness to their country and prosperity to the British empire, were places, pensions, and peerages. This scheme of treachery and corruption bore so many tokens of ministerial origin, that Franklin condescended to reply to it, for the purpose of exposing the folly of the plan of government it set forth, and he treated the proffered honors with cutting sarcasm and contemptuous derision. This reply closed the correspondence with M. Charles de Weissenstein.

Besides these secret agents, others in England, of a different class, the personal friends of Franklin, men of probity and honor, opposed to the measures which brought on the war, and, still faithful to their principles, pressed him in their letters for propositions which might, in his judgment, serve as a basis for overtures of peace, and a settlement of the points in controversy, on terms consistent with the honor of all, and advantageous to both countries. The most assiduous and persevering of these correspondents was David Hartley, a member of Parliament, a sensible, intelligent, benevolent man, whose motives Franklin knew to be pure, and who sought only the public good. But neither Mr. Hartley nor, indeed, any other Englishman, could fully comprehend the true position and interests of the United States, or the extent to which their people had been injured and alienated by the acts and agents of the British government; and all his plans of pacification involved so many of the old

views of colonial dependence and British supremacy as to be wholly inadmissible. Franklin laid open these objections in perfect good temper toward his friend, but in the most explicit terms, and showed him that the British government could have peace and commerce with the United States only as with a sovereign and independent nation, and on terms of entire reciprocity. But though Mr. Hartley found his efforts to move Franklin from his position in reference to this subject wholly unavailing, yet it is due to him to state that, at Franklin's request, he inquired into the condition of American prisoners in England, and not only applied such money as Franklin was able to send over for their relief, but collected among his acquaintances other sums for the same benevolent purpose, and was active and serviceable in facilitating their exchange.

In September, 1778, to avoid the needless expense of three commissioners in France, Congress appointed Franklin sole minister, and Mr. Adams returned home, leaving Mr. Lee, the other commissioner, still in Europe.

Almost immediately on Franklin's arrival at Paris he had been beset with applications for letters in behalf of military men of every rank and character, from almost every corner of Europe, seeking service in America. These applications were so zealously pressed by such an array of recommendations, that Franklin's good-nature led him, in the outset, to a somewhat overready compliance; and though he soon perceived the necessity of caution, yet the annoyance continued during the whole war. He assisted, however, in commending to the good-will and respect of Congress and of Washington one person who never gave cause to regret the confidence reposed in him — the then young marquis de Lafayette. This name, it is true, now stands in history on a page of light, and any tribute to it here is superfluous. Still, it is pleasant to

look back at the first public notice of one whose memory is enshrined in every American heart. "He is gone to America," says Franklin, "in a ship of his own, accompanied by several officers of distinction, to serve in our armies. He is exceedingly beloved; and we are satisfied that the respect which may be shown him will be serviceable to our affairs here, by pleasing not only his powerful relations and the court, but the whole French nation."

At that early period, Congress not having yet organized a consular system, numberless transactions arising from the details of commerce, or connected with the disposal of prizes taken at sea, and with the fitting out of cruisers in French ports — matters usually managed by consuls — devolved on Franklin, and, added to his more exclusively diplomatic duties, subjected him to a much greater amount of labor than is demanded of an American plenipotentiary in these more systematic times. This is made very manifest in his correspondence with Congress, through the successive presidents of that body and its committee on foreign affairs. This correspondence not only shows how assiduously, and with what patriotic solicitude as well as ability, he watched over the great interests committed to his charge, but it demonstrates, as we believe any candid reader, after an attentive perusal of it, will admit, that no other man could have promoted those interests so effectually, or have secured for his country so much aid from France, or so much respect and good-will throughout Europe, as did Franklin. Indeed, from his first appearance at Paris, in a diplomatic capacity, he may well be said to have been substantially the representative of the United States, not only to the French court, but to all the courts of continental Europe. And this resulted, not merely from the fact that the court of France was the great wheel, as Arthur Lee called it,

which moved the courts of other nations, but it was also in no small degree the natural consequence of Franklin's great name and European reputation — of the universal homage paid to him for his splendid career in philosophy, and the distinguished ability and manly boldness with which he had, while colonial agent in London, defined and asserted the political rights of the American people, and resisted the aggressions of the British government upon their liberties.

The general estimation of Franklin in Europe, not only as a philosopher, nor merely as one among many faithful and illustrious assertors of the liberties of his countrymen, but as pre-eminently the founder of their freedom, can not be more strikingly exemplified than by the following incident: An artist in Paris, having designed an engraving to commemorate the independence of the United States, submitted his design to Franklin's inspection and proposed to dedicate it to him. The principal symbol in the piece was, it seems, the figure of Franklin in the garb of a Roman senator, with his name inscribed beneath. To this he promptly and flatly refused his assent, because it ascribed to him exclusively the freedom of America, and he insisted that the figure should be made to symbolize Congress, and the print be dedicated to that body; for, otherwise, said he in a note to the artist, "it would be unjust to the numbers of wise and brave men who, by their arms and counsels, have shared in the enterprise and contributed to its success, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes." Such were the modesty, magnanimity, and living sense of justice, of Franklin.

The elevation and generosity of his nature, indeed, his true wisdom, were well illustrated by his sentiments in regard to privateering, against the toleration of which he expressed himself in the strongest terms, and proposed that the nations of Europe should combine to put it down

by express stipulations in their treaties with each other; and, as a further extension of the same humane policy, demanded by the whole spirit of Christian civilization, he also proposed that, in war as in peace, all people, to whatever country they might belong, belligerent or neutral, while engaged by land or sea in producing or transporting food or anything else needed for the support and comfort of life, or the advancement of peaceful pursuits, should remain unmolested. Both these principles should, he held, be incorporated into the general law of nations, not only as being alike humane and just toward the individuals and families directly affected by them, but as being certain also to lessen the frequency of war by destroying the hope of plunder.

Similar proofs of his philanthropy and abhorrence of rapine and violence in every form, were furnished in the passports which, as minister plenipotentiary, he issued, to protect from American cruisers the vessels annually sent from England, with food and other supplies for the Moravian settlements on the coast of Labrador; and in doing the same thing for the vessels under the celebrated navigator Captain James Cook, who had, before the war, been sent on a voyage of discovery, and was supposed to be now on his way home. No man ever possessed in larger measure than Franklin the desire to encourage every enterprise to advance knowledge, diffuse the spirit of benevolence, and liberalize the policy of governments; and the last-named act of magnanimous humanity drew from the English board of trade a vote of acknowledgment, together with an elegant copy of Cook's Voyages, and the splendid collection of plates belonging to it, accompanied by a courteous letter from Lord Howe, stating that the gift was made with the king's approbation.

A few days after reaching Paris, Franklin took up his residence at Passy, some two or three miles out of the

The Story of the Whistle.

city, and overlooking the river Seine. There, as he wrote to an old friend, "in a fine house, in a neat village, on high ground, with a large garden to walk in," he dwelt during the whole of his mission to France. It was a pleasant situation, and among his neighbors were several families of great respectability and worth, where he soon became a cherished and honored inmate, and where he enjoyed habitual intercourse with a large circle comprising many of the most cultivated, distinguished, and agreeable people of both sexes, that French society could furnish. At Passy he wrote several of his best tracts on political topics, besides several valuable papers on philosophical subjects, particularly one, which was read before the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, on the *aurora borealis*, stating his reasons for supposing that splendid phenomenon to be a result of electrical action. At Passy, too, he wrote, for the entertainment of the circle of friends just mentioned, some of his most sprightly and instructive humorous pieces, among which were "The Whistle," "The Ephemera," "The Morals of Chess," and others. The hospitality, affectionate respect, and attention, he received from the families referred to, soothed him under his increasing infirmities, and cheered him under the heavy burden of his varied and laborious public duties.

The details of his diplomatic labors are far too voluminous to be recounted here. History has taken charge of them; and it is enough to say, in this place, that, multiplied, burdensome, and important, as they were, he performed them with the ability and fidelity which characterized his long career of public service, and with a skill and success which won for him the spontaneous testimony alike of the firm and clear-headed John Jay, then minister to Spain, and of the enlightened and high-minded count de Vergennes, the French secretary. Congress,

also, declined complying with his request, made in March, 1781, to be recalled, and placed him shortly after on the commission with Adams, Jay, and Laurens, to negotiate peace, overtures for which were first made on the part of the British cabinet in January, 1782; and, after a protracted negotiation, a preliminary treaty, recognising the independence of the United States and fixing their boundaries, was signed in November of the same year; and a further negotiation, for the settlement of other matters, terminated in a definitive treaty, substantially the same as the other, and executed at Paris, September 3, 1783.

The independence and sovereignty of the United States being thus established, Mr. Jay returned home, and Mr. Jefferson was sent out to act with Franklin and Adams in the negotiation of treaties with other nations. But though the cabinets of Europe, through their embassadors at Paris, expressed a disposition to maintain amicable relations with the United States, no treaty was actually made except with Prussia. This treaty gave its sanction to Franklin's doctrine against privateering and the spoliation of private property; and putting his signature to it was his last act as the diplomatic representative of his country.

Franklin left Paris on the 12th of July, 1785. His departure was accompanied by the most expressive testimonials of regret from the court as well as from a numerous train of private friends, including men of the highest rank and most eminent worth; and on the 14th of September he found himself once more in Philadelphia. His return was greeted with every mark of personal regard and public respect. The Assembly of Pennsylvania, then sitting, addressed him as one "whose services not only merited the thanks of the present generation, but would be recorded in history to his immortal honor;" and other public bodies paid him similar tributes.

He was now rapidly approaching the end of his eightieth year, and was looking only for repose, exempt, for the remainder of his days, from all further public cares. But he could not, even yet, be allowed to retire. Very shortly after his return the Assembly and executive council of Pennsylvania elected him governor of the state for the ensuing year; and the choice was renewed for three years in succession, which was as long as the constitution permitted, till after an interval of four years.

His domestic situation and the occupation of his private hours might be beautifully depicted by many extracts from his own letters written in the brief period still left to him. A few words, however, will give the spirit of the whole. He lived in his own house, with his daughter and her children about him to gratify his affections; with conversation, books, and his garden, to recreate him; and with the unalterable esteem of his country to crown his long toils in her service; and though conscious that his life on earth must soon close, yet he wrote to a venerable friend — "I can cheerfully, with filial confidence, resign my spirit to that great and good Parent of mankind who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my birth to the present hour." It was in this spirit that, in the federal convention of 1787 — the last national body in which he sat — he moved to open its daily sittings with prayer, declaring that the longer he lived the more proofs he saw of God's government in human affairs.

Similar sentiments abound in his letters, but the most formal statement of them is given in his reply, on this subject, in March, 1790, to President Stiles, of Yale college. There he explicitly states his belief in God, as creator and governor of all things, and entitled to worship; in doing good to each other as our best service to him; in the immortality of the soul, and a future state of

retribution; that while he had some doubts of the divinity of Jesus, yet he believed his system of religion and morality as left by him the best ever taught; and that for himself he relied solely on the goodness of God, without the slightest idea of meriting it.

Useful to the end, Franklin gave his remaining strength to the cause of education and freedom; and some of his latest efforts were made for the abolition of negro-slavery. His malady, the stone, kept him for his last year chiefly on his bed; and he continued thus till the end of March, 1790, when he was seized with severe pain in the chest and fever, ending in abscess of the lungs, the bursting of which soon proved fatal, and he expired April 17, 1790, the anniversary of his birth-day.

During his severe sufferings from the pain in his chest, when a groan escaped him, "he would observe," says his physician, "that he was afraid he did not bear them as he ought; acknowledging his grateful sense of the many blessings he had received from the Supreme Being, who had raised him from small beginnings to such high rank and consideration among men." Another friend, speaking of his long confinement, says: "No repining, no peevish expression, ever escaped him; and upon every occasion he displayed the clearness of his intellect and the cheerfulness of his temper." Thus died BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, full of years as of honors. Thus terminated a life as remarkable for its early development of the highest traits of character in the midst of the laborious occupations of a tradesman, as for the achievements in philosophy and the services to his country, which rendered it illustrious, and which has left the richest lessons of wisdom to every succeeding generation.

THE END.

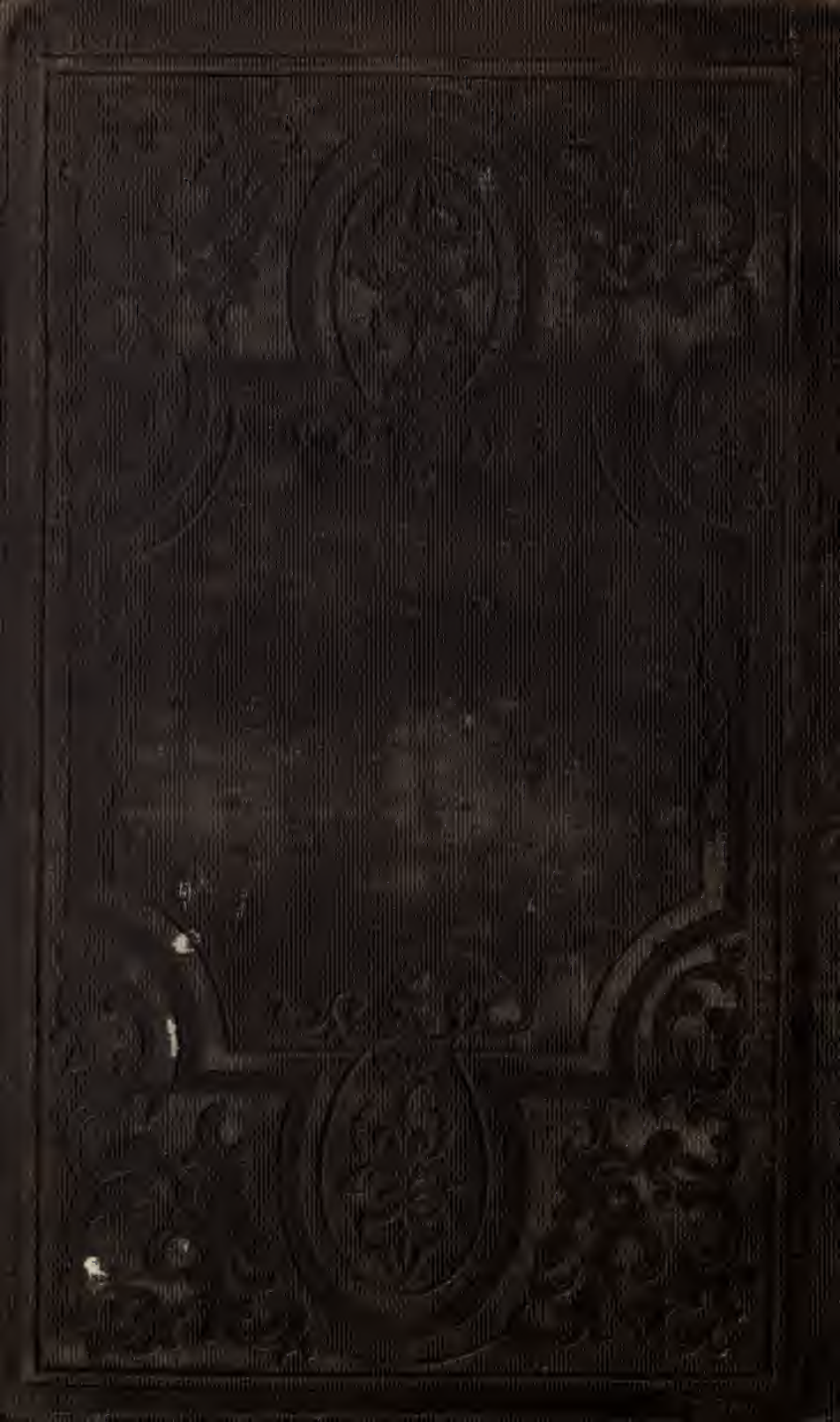
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
BERKELEY

Return to desk from which borrowed.
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

8 May'52 NL
14 May'52
20Apr'53RT
APR 10 1953 LU
MAY 26 1954 LU
REC'D LD
OCT 8 1956
11 Nov'57 FC
REC'D LD
OCT 30 1957

19Jan'59 MH
REC'D LD
JAN 16 1959
9Mar'60 BB
REC'D LD
MAR 10 1960
28Oct'60 DF
REC'D LD
OCT 17 1960

18Jan'63 KL
REC'D LD
JAN 8 1963
DEC 13 1966 5 2
DEC 9 '66
LOAN

LD 21–95m–11,'50(2877s16)476

YB 37684